PLUCK AND LUCK

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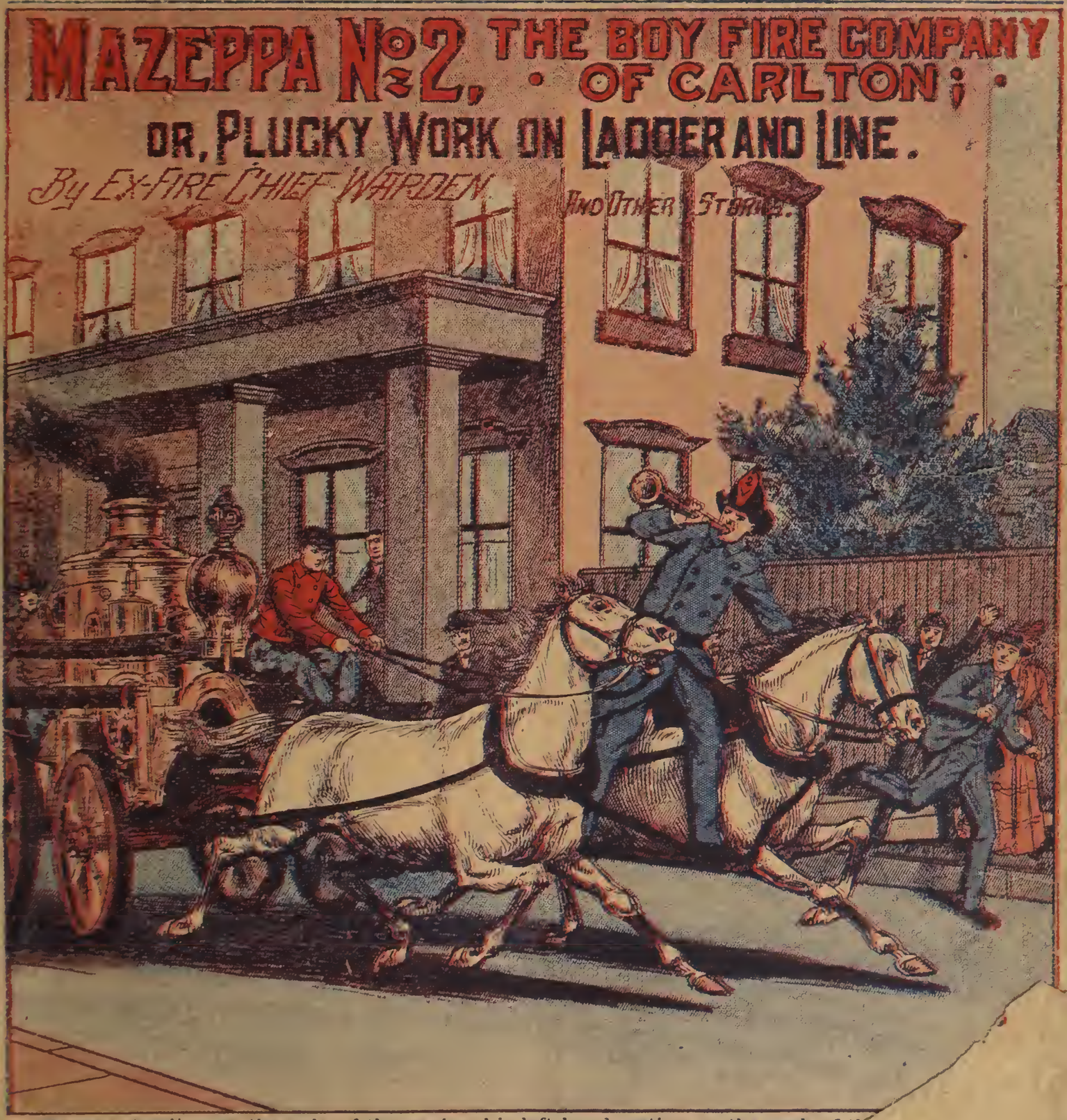
MAZEPPA No. 2, THE BOY FIRE COMPANY OF CARLTON; OR, PLUCKY WORK ON LADDER AND LINE.

By EX-FIRE CHIEF WARDEN

AND OTHER STORIES.



He was standing on the pole of the engine, his left hand resting on the neck of t... side. His right hand held a silver trumpet to his lips. "Clea... way'" came through the trumpet again.

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MAZEPPA No. 2

THE BOY FIRE COMPANY OF CARLTON

OR, PLUCKY WORK ON LADDER AND LINE

By EX-FIRE CHIEF WARDEN

CHAPTER I.—"Oh, the Tower Falls!"

On a dark night some years ago three young men were on the main street of Carlton House, the leading hotel of the place. They seemed to be quite excited over something that had happened inside the hotel. One was particularly angry.

"Why did you interefere?" he said to his companions. "I would have given him the thrashing he deserved, the young whelp!"

"Keep cool, Al. Had we permitted you to attack him in there, her name would have been mixed up in it, and that would not do, you know."

"No, of course not," assented the third young man.

"That would do her no harm," angrily replied the first young man. "Here he comes now! Hands off, and I'll give him what he deserves," and he fairly hissed the words as he gazed at a medium-sized youth of eighteen coming out of the hotel.

The youth was of shapely build, with a frank, manly air about him and laughing blue eyes. He was plainly dressed, but carried himself like one who feared nothing in all the wide world. As he descended to the sidewalk he went in the direction of the three young men some fifty feet away from the hotel entrance. The angry young man sprang forward as he approached, exclaiming in low, hissing tones:

"This is for you, Tom Hazen!" and with the last word dealt him a blow squarely between the eyes.

The youth staggered backward under the force of the blow. But he recovered in an instant and sprang forward with the agility of a tiger.

Clang! Clang! Clang! A great bell in the heart of the city is struck three times. At the first stroke the youth came to a full stop, as if suddenly rooted to the spot, and seemed to be listening. At the second he bounded forward, dealt his foe a terrific blow on the right cheek, and then darted off across the street and disappeared in the shadow of the houses over there. The blow downed the young man. But he sprang to his feet only to be caught and held by his two companions.

"Release me!" he hoarsely cried, struggling to get away from them. "Let me go after him! I'll have it out with the young whelp or die!"

"Keep quiet, Al," urged one of his two friends. "He has gone to his fire company. What show would you have there? They would tear you limb from limb!"

The exchange of blows was made so quickly that none but the four interested ones knew of it. But the clanging of the great fire bell caused everybody in the hotel to rush out and eagerly gaze about for the whereabouts of the fire. The three strokes told in which ward the fire was, and those who understood the signals looked in the direction of the south side of the city. Just as they caught a glimpse of a bright glare in that direction a roar was heard up the street.

"Look out! Keep clear of the street!" cried a voice on the sidewalk. "The engine is coming."

The roaring was like that of a storm at sea, growing louder every moment. People who had run out into the street to get a better view of the reddening glow dashed back to the sidewalk for safety.

"Look out! Here comes Mazeppa No. 2!"

Clang! Clang! Clang! The fire engine bell struck to warn people out of the way.

"Clear the way!" came through a trumpet, and the words were heard clear and distinct above the roar of the rushing steeds. Almost at the same moment a magnificent fire engine, its nickel and brass finishings burnished till they shone like stars, dashed by, drawn by two superb iron grays. Between the horses, near their shoulders, trumpet in hand and helmet on his head, stood the youth who was struck as he came out of the hotel but a few moments before. He was standing on the pole of the engine, his left hand resting on the neck of the horse on that side. His right hand held a silver trumpet to his lips.

"Clear the way!" came through the trumpet again, and in another moment the roaring, rushing panorama was way down in the next block.

"I never saw anything like that before!" exclaimed a guest of the hotel. "I shall never forget it as long as I live. Who is that youth standing erect between those horses?"

"That was Tom Hazen, foreman of the Boys' Fire Company," replied a policeman near by.

"What was he standing on?"

"Nothing but the pole."

"Here comes Mazeppa's ladders!" cried a voice in the crowd, and in another moment a hook and

ladder team dashed by in the wake of the fire engine.

By this time the red glare in the southern end of the city grew brighter, and the crowd on the street surged along in that direction. It was in the aristocratic part of the town, and people knew that it was a private residence that was burning.

"It's Leonard Morton's house!" called out some one in the crowd.

"Why! That's the finest house in the town!" exclaimed another, and the crowd that still remained in and about the hotel made a rush down the street.

"What's that?" cried a young man, going along in the opposite direction. "Whose house did they say was burning?"

"They say it's your father's, Al," replied his companion, looking around at the red glare against the horizon, "but I don't think it can be, as it seems a little too far to the left."

"Oh, my God!" and the young man turned and gazed in the direction of the fire like one half dazed. He was the same young man who had been knocked down by Tom Hazen, the young fireman, only a few minutes before, and his name was Al Morton, son of the rich banker and manufacturer.

"No, I don't think it is, either," added the third young man.

"Let's get a carriage and go down," said young Morton. "Call one, Dick, that's a good fellow. I'm all broke to pieces."

Dick Algood ran across the street to where several hacks stood and sprang into one. The driver hurried over to the other two young men, and they sprang inside quickly.

"Drive to the fire, quick!" cried one of the party, and the carriage went down the street at a furious pace. Mazeppa No. 2, the boy fire company, was the first on the ground, even getting a stream playing on the flames ere any other engine arrived. It was a grand mansion, four stories high, standing in a grove of elms. By some strange accident the entire lower floor was filled with a seething mass of flames. Nearly the entire household had been caught in the upper stories, and they were screaming for help from the windows when the firemen arrived. Dense volumes of black smoke, with now and then a tongue of red flame darting out like that of a venomous serpent. Tom Hazen, the young fireman of Mazeppa No. 2, sprang to the ground, gazed up at the windows, and sang out through his trumpet:

"Boys, here are lives to be saved! Let every one do his duty! Up with the ladder! Pour a stream through that door there!" and he pointed to the front door of the mansion which had been burst open by some one.

Ere the last word had passed his lips a stream of water was poured through the open door. It was heard to strike the stairs and fall in a shower on the floor.

"Save me! Oh, oh, oh! I'm burning up!" came in shrieks from a third story window.

The ladder had just touched the window of the next room. Dropping his trumpet and letting it swing by the cord over his shoulder, Tom Hazen sprang to the ladder and ran up to the third story window with the agility of a squirrel going up a tree. On reaching the window he climbed in, though a dense volume of black smoke puffed out into his face. Then Jack Thorn, assistant foreman, sprang forward and ran up the ladder after him. Jack was the same size and age as Tom and his bosom friend. He, too, disappeared through the window.

"Those boys will be lost!" cried a voice in the crowd.

"Clear the way, there!" cried a policeman. "Here comes another engine! Back there, I say! Clear the way!" and, aided by half a dozen others, he pushed back the crowd and made room for the second engine.

Just a few seconds later the third engine dashed up, the Vigilant, the oldest fire company in Carlton, whose members were all veteran firemen. Then came the chief of the fire department, a tall man with eagle eyes and a huge tawny mustache. He saw at a glance that the house was doomed and sang out to the firemen:

"Boys, the house is doomed! Save all the lives you can!"

"Hi! Hi! Look there!" cried the boy fireman, as a figure appeared at a window with a girl in his arms.

"It's Jack!" cried one.

"No, it's Tom!" cried another.

"Move the ladder! Move the ladder!"

A half dozen darted forward and moved the ladder to the window where he stood. Quick as a flash a big strong fellow from Vigilant Fire Company rushed forward and ran up Mazeppa's ladder.

"Gimme your load, my lad!" he said to the boy fireman in the window, and in another moment he had the form of an unconscious young girl in his arms.

"Come out, my lad!" he called to Tom.

Tom instantly disappeared, and the fireman went down the ladder with his burden. A rush was made to see if she was hurt.

"Back! Back!" cried the police. "Stand back out of the way!"

Young Al Morton ran forward and cried out to one of the officers:

"This is my home! I have a right to be here! That is my youngest sister!" and he rushed up to the brawny fireman who still bore her in his arms, exclaiming:

"Give her to me! She is my sister!"

"She has only fainted, young man," said the fireman, as he gave her to him.

"There's Jack! There's Jack!" cried the young Mazeppas. "Play on him, Bill! He is all ablaze!"

Bill Saxton, the boy at the nozzle, turned the stream on Jack Thorn, who appeared at the window to the left of the ladder. He seemed all ablaze, and held something in his arms.

"Run up and help him, Dan!" called out the boy at the nozzle, and Dan Allen, another of Mazeppa's boys, sprang to the ladder.

"Move the ladder—move the ladder!" yelled a score at once, and the long ladder was turned over several times against the house till it reached the window.

"Now, Dan, up with you!"

Dan fairly flew over the rungs. When he got there poor Jack had sunk to the floor, overcome by heat and smoke.

"Dan—Dan!" called those below. "Look out!"

"Send another up!" Dan sung out, and then leaped into the window, disappearing from view of those below.

A groan escaped many of the boys, for they loved brave Dan as a brother.

"There he is—there he is!" yelled half a hundred, as Dan reappeared at the window with Jack in his arms.

"Blanket, boys!" Dan cried.

Four of the young firemen sprang forward and held the four corners of a strong piece of canvas called a "blanket" directly under the window. The next moment the unconscious form of Jack Thorn came whizzing through the air and landed on it. The rebound sent him up some two feet again, when he fell back like one dead.

"Is he dead?"

"Is he alive?"

"Is he much burned?"

How thick and fast came the questions as they bore him away from the burning building. Again the police had to club the excited crowd back.

"Look at Dan! He has another!"

Brave Dan reappeared with the woman Jack had fallen to the floor with. He held her with his left, and used his right arm to balance himself with, as he climbed out on the ladder.

"Be ready with the blanket again, boys!" cries the chief of the fire department. "Dan is a hero! Save him from a fall!"

But Dan ran down the ladder with his burden, a little lady of slender build, who was entirely unconscious. A wild cheer went from the vast throng when they saw him safely land. The fire chief sprang forward, caught his hand and exclaimed:

"You are a hero, Dan Allen!"

Dan was so blinded by fire and smoke he could not even see who it was who had spoken to him. When they saw him feeling his way about they led him away.

"Oh, my God, boys!" cried Bill Saxton, the nozzle holder. "Tom is there yet!"

"Yes, yes! Save Tom, boys!" and half a dozen rushed to the ladder at once.

"Come back! Come back!" yelled the fire chief in stentorian tones.

"We must save Tom Hazen!" they cried, and up they went.

But they were met by great tongues of red flame, threatening instant death, and they had to back down. No human being could have faced those fiery blasts and live, hence all on the ground believed the brave young fireman had met his death at last.

"Tom is lost!" cried one of the boy firemen, and groans and sobs were heard from many of them.

"No! There he is! Up on the tower! Hooray—hooray!"

There he was on the roof of the tower, which rose above the building on the left corner, with a young girl standing by his side. Placing the trumpet to his lips, he called out to the firemen below:

"Give us a ladder from the tree!"

The tree was a great elm, some ten feet from the corner of the house. Some of its branches actually touched it. The leaves were withering under the scorching heat. The brave boys hurried with all their speed to place a ladder against the tree. That done, two men ran up into the tree to pull up another ladder to run it out to the tower. The walls were almost ready to fall. The flames were eating away the tower where it touched the main building. Tom stood on the roof with his left arm supporting the young lady by his side. The tower was actually reeling.

"Hurry up, boys!" he called through the trumpet in his right hand.

Then he was seen speaking to the young girl.

"They can't save us," she said to him. "We are doomed. You will lose your life in trying to save mine. God will reward you for your noble sacrifice."

"Don't despair; see, they are hurrying up with the ladder."

"But the tower is sinking! Hold me close! Oh, God, this is awful!"

"Here, I'll jump for the limbs!" cried Tom. "Let me make you fast to me first!" and he took the strong silk cord that he used to hang his trumpet over his shoulder and passed it around her slender waist. Then he tied it hard and fast to his leather belt.

"Oh, the tower falls!" she cried, and a long wail of despair escaped her lips as she flung her arms about his neck. At the same moment the tower made a sudden drop of about a foot and then fell toward the tree, crashing against the branches, while groans of horror went up from the multitude below.

CHAPTER II.—A Close Call—Tom Hazen.

A dense volume of smoke and cinders enveloped the brave fireman and the young girl as the tower fell to the ground with a terrific crash. The firemen made a rush to rescue them, but they were not found there. They looked in vain until a great cheer went up from the multitude.

"There they are in the tree, in the tree, in the tree!"

There they were, sure enough. Tom was hanging to a limb with both hands and the young girl was clinging to his neck. She had not fainted.

"The ladder—the ladder!" cried the chief. "Stand a ladder under him."

Brave firemen from all three engines rushed forward to hold a ladder against Tom Hazen as he hung there in the tree. They held it against him so he could put his feet on the rung and then let go the limb. The moment he let go and caught hold of the ladder a great wild cheer burst from the multitude. Men burst into tears of joy, so great had been the tension of suspense.

Woman-like, as soon as her feet touched the ground, the young lady swooned and seemed like one dead. Some one cut the cord that bound her to Tom, and Al Morton burst into the crowd, seized her in his arms, kissed her pallid face, and cried out wildly:

"Clear the way! Clear the way, there!" and started off through the crowd with her.

Of course the crowd gave way, and she was borne to a place of safety. No sooner had she been taken from Tom than the chief of the fire department rushed up to him and grasped his hand. What he said to him no one heard, for a wild shout went up all around him. The boys of Mazeppa No. 2 sprang forward, lifted him on their shoulders, and bore him back away from the terrible heat of the conflagration.

"Hooray! Hooray!" they yelled, and the great crowd re-echoed their cheers.

Bill Saxton, though, never relaxed a single moment with his steady stream of water, nor did either of the other two engines. But the house was doomed. The flames made such quick headway that nothing on earth could have saved it.

"Let me down, boys!" Tom cried. "This is no time for play."

"They're all out! They're all saved!" cried the boys, as they bore him around on their shoulders.

"Let me down!" he called again, and they finally let him down on his feet.

"Where's Jack?" he asked.

"He is hurt," replied some one.

"Badly? Is he alive?"

"Yes. He has been taken away."

"Anybody killed?" and he turned to the fire chief.

"I think not. But I never saw more narrow escapes in all my life."

"I never had such a close call in my life," Tom said. "Who was that young lady? She is the bravest girl that ever lived. Why, she wasn't half as much frightened as I was."

No one in the crowd around him could tell him who she was.

"Where did you find her?" some one asked him.

"In one of the rooms on the third floor. She seemed to be dazed by the heat and smoke, and didn't know which way to turn.

"'Come, let's get out of this!' I called to her, and she came up to me with both hands outstretched, saying:

"'Take me out, please,' and I caught her hand and ran up into the next room, through which I had just come. To my horror, I found that the ladder had been moved. I caught her round the waist and ran her into a corridor, and up a flight of stairs. Every place was filled with smoke. I struck another flight, and found it leading to the little tower. There I got a breath of air, with no smoke in it, and it revived both of us. But I saw that our chance of escape was slim, and told her so. Would you believe it, she told me to save myself and leave her to her fate? I said, if she couldn't go with me, I'd go with her. She's the bravest girl I ever saw."

"Stand clear; the walls may fall!" came from Bill Saxton, running back toward the engine with his nozzle.

The crowd moved back, but the wall didn't fall.

"Tom Hazen, are you hurt?" the fire chief asked him.

"I really don't know, chief," he replied. "I believe I have a few burns."

"Do you know who it is you have saved?"

"No."

"She is Miss Pelham, the daughter of the governor."

"Indeed! Well, I would have risked as much for the poorest girl in Carlton."

"Of course you would. We all know that. Come back farther away from the fire."

They moved farther back and then Tom said:

"I am worried about Jack. Who knows how badly he was hurt?"

"They took him to the hospital," some one said.

"I want to see him, chief; can I go?" and he turned to the chief.

"Yes, go ahead, Tom. I'll take your place," was the chief's reply.

Tom turned away, followed by a number of people. Some believed he bore a charmed life and were superstitious about him. The hospital was half a mile away, but he soon covered the distance. He was met at the door by the man on duty there, who asked him:

"What do you want, sir?"

"I want to see Jack Thorn, one of my company, who was hurt at the fire to-night," Tom said.

"You can't see him to-night."

"Why not?"

"Against the rules."

"Can I see one of the doctors?"

"Yes—in the office," and the man pointed to the door which led into the office of the hospital.

Tom went in and there found a young physician and a clerk in charge.

"What do you want?" the clerk asked him.

"I want to see a doctor here."

"There's the doctor," and the clerk nodded toward the young man seated at a desk. Tom went over to him and told him who he was, and added:

"I would like to see Jack. He is one of our firemen."

"You can't see him to-night," was the curt reply.

"Not if he wishes to see me?"

"No."

Tom stood there a minute or two looking hard at the young man. He was too indignant to say anything for a few moments.

"What are you waiting for?" the young doctor finally asked, looking up at him.

"Nothing. I was simply admiring you," was the sarcastic reply. "Can you tell me where I can get one of your pictures?"

The young doctor flushed up quite red in the face and called to the clerk:

"Put this fellow out of here!"

The clerk came forward, put his hand rather roughly on Tom's shoulder and said:

"Come, get out now!"

Tom wheeled and pushed him over on the young doctor, upset him, and both rolled over on the floor. Then he turned and left the office and the hospital. Out on the street, Tom hastened back to the engine house. He was too mad even to think.

"Oh, but I would like to get his head under my arm for just ten seconds," he said to himself, as he hastened on. "Rules—rules—rules for everything! If we were tied up with rules, neither life nor property would be safe. Jack is as brave a boy as ever lived. Why they should not let his superior officer see him in his agony I can't understand. Lord, but I am in need of a little attention myself. I am scorched in a dozen places. I'll go into a drug store and get 'em to put some salve on my burns."

He went into the next one he saw, a large one on the main street of the city.

"Is there a doctor here who can do something for me?" he asked of the drug clerk. "I am burnt in several places."

"Yes—one in the back room; but why don't you go to the hospital?"

"Because I don't wish to do so," he replied, as he passed in to where the night physician had his desk behind a row of screens.

The doctor looked up, and Tom asked if he was a physician.

"Yes—what can I do for you?"

"I am a fireman, and have got some burns I would like to have dressed."

"Of course—let me see them," and the doctor arose and proceeded to examine his hurts.

When he had found out the extent of his hurts he asked:

"Is it true that the Morton residence is a total loss?"

"Yes; I think it is. It was all we could do to save lives, let alone any property."

Just then a party of young men came in and sat down on the other side of the screen to wait for the doctor.

"Yes, I saw it all," one of them said. "Al was full enough to toast Miss Pelham's beauty—his own cousin. Hazen had just come in looking for a friend whom he heard was in there. On hearing the toast, he said no gentleman would use a lady's name in a barroom. Al got furiously mad, and it was all we could do to prevent a fight then and there. But we finally got him out. Hazen came along a few minutes later, and Al went for him, striking him square between the eyes.

The fire bell struck the same moment. Hazen knocked him down and broke for the fire. He saved Miss Pelham's life. What a strange coincidence!"

"Yes; very strange, indeed," assented one of the others.

"They say he came from Hallsville two years ago to work in the iron foundry, and nobody knows anything about his people."

"Oh, he isn't but eighteen, you know."

"True, he is but a boy; but he has come to be the most daring fireman in the city, and all the boys who went into that fire company with him believe in him and back him against the world."

"Of course they do. Who would have believed he could have trained up boys to be such firemen as they are? Mazeppa No. 2 beat all the others to the fire to-night."

"Yes, and most of the others are old veterans, too. Al swore he'd run Hazen out of Carlton because of what took place at the hotel to-night; and since the young fireman has saved the life of Miss Pelham he'll hate him more than ever, I should think."

"Why, I should think it would cause him to love him."

"Not much. Al is in love with his beautiful cousin, and now she'll be saying complimentary things about the young fireman to everybody."

"Oh, I see. He'll be jealous," and the others laughed.

"That's it, and——"

Clang! Clang! Clang!

"Here, hold on, there!" cried the doctor behind the screen. "Stop that fellow!"

At the first clang of the great fire bell Tom Hazen, who was lying on the table having his hurts dressed by the doctor, sprang up, seized hat and trumpet and started on a run. The doctor caught him by the arm and tried to hold him, mindful of his fee, but Tom hurled him off and dashed away like a deer.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed young Allgood, "that was Tom Hazen himself!"

As Tom ran out of the drug store he met the boys of Mazeppa No. 2 just returning from the other fire. At the alarm they turned their engine in the direction of the new alarm. Tom joined them and rushed along at their head. On reaching the fire, which was in a tenement house, he rushed inside and up the stairs, coming across a woman who was about to jump out a window. He held her back until a ladder was put up, when he handed her over to his fireboys. But suddenly he was seized from behind and hurled from the window. He caught on a mass of telegraph wires and held on until the boys put up a ladder for him. He reached the ground and the woman he had passed out the window told him that he must have been attacked by the same lunatic that set fire to the house. He had been seen by several tenants acting in a suspicious manner just before the fire was discovered.

Tom went home and to bed. Early the next morning he was awakened by a knock and when he opened the door two men entered. They stated they were detectives looking for a diamond ring that had been stolen from Miss Pelham the night before, and began searching Tom's clothes, which hung on the door.

"I have it," said one who was searching his pants pockets, and he held up a diamond ring, after which both took their departure.

CHAPTER III.—The Story of the Diamond Ring.

To say that Tom was astonished at what had taken place would not express it at all. He was dumfounded—speechless with amazement, and he dropped down on a chair and gazed at the wall in front of him till his brain was in a whirl. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, exclaiming:

"That is a game played on me! That ring was not in that pocket!" and he seized the trousers and turned the waistband pocket inside out.

"Ah!" and he stood rooted to the spot, for the entire bottom of the pocket was gone.

It had been torn out! He sat down to think.

"Why was it done?" he asked himself, gazing at the wall again.

"Is any one trying to make me out a thief? Did Miss Pelham send them here to search me? Ah! I have it now! Al Morton is at the bottom of this. He seeks to ruin me, and he has got the game all in his hands, too. What good will any denial from me do against the fact that it was found in my pocket? Lord, what a mean revenge! If I can save myself from such a charge, I'll break every bone in Al Morton's body and then take the consequences! Oh, I see through it now! Dick Allgood said in that drug-store last night that Al would be jealous of me because I had saved her life. To make her think I am a thief, is the object of this little game. Heavens! but he is mean enough to betray his own mother!"

Tom paced back and forth in his room like an enraged tiger. He was trying to make up his mind what was best for him to do under the circumstances. There were features about it that puzzled him.

"I'll go and see the chief about it," he finally decided, and in a few moments he was on his way downstairs to get something to eat before going out.

He called at the office of the fire chief, but that official was not in. Quite a number of citizens who recognized him rushed forward and shook hands with him. But he wanted to see the chief and went in search of him. He met Ben Stewart, one of the boy firemen.

"Glad to see you, Tom," Ben said. "We were afraid you were badly hurt."

"Well, I was. I feel sore all over yet, but I guess I can keep on my feet. Come on and help me find the chief. I want to see him."

So Ben went along with him. Some one told him the chief was at the Carlton House, and he went there. The moment he entered the hotel a rush was made to shake his hand and congratulate him on his heroic work the night before. He was very modest about it, and said he had tried to do his duty.

"Ah!" cried a strong-voiced man behind him. "Let me take your hand, my boy!" and ere he knew it he was shaking hands with Leonard Morton, the rich banker. "You saved the lives of my daughters and niece last night at the risk of your own. If you ever need a friend, come to Leonard Morton," and he wrung Tom's hand with such vigor the young fireman wondered if he knew about the diamond ring.

"I am glad I was able to do what I did, sir," Tom replied.

"So are all of us," returned the banker.

A few minutes later a servant came to Mr. Morton and told him that the ladies wanted to bring the young fireman upstairs so they could thank him. Tom heard her and promptly spoke up:

"Tell the ladies a fireman does not expect thanks for doing his duty."

"You must go up with me," Mr. Morton said.

"Indeed, sir, I cannot."

"Why not?"

"Because I came here on other business, and must defer seeing the ladies till some other time. Ah, chief! Glad to see you! I went to your office to see you, but you were out. I have urgent business with you."

"Come on, then," said the chief, "we'll go back there," and he led the way, followed by Tom and Ben.

Once more in the chief's office, Tom shut the door, bound him and Ben to secrecy, and then related the story of the ring, together with an account of his encounter with young Al Morton just a few moments before the fire broke out the night before.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the chief. "I saw that ring on her hand as young Morton bore her away in his arms!"

"So did I!" exclaimed Ben Stewart, "and I know a dozen others who must have seen it, too."

"Then that lets me out!" Tom said, his eyes filling with tears. "But somebody is trying to ruin me."

"Do you know the two men who found the ring?" the chief asked.

"No; but they said they were detectives employed to hunt up the ring."

"You would know them again?"

"Yes, of course."

"Well, I think young Morton has played the trick to make Miss Pelham think you an unworthy character. Let's see how many saw the ring on her hand as he bore her away. We can find out without letting the secret out. Don't mention it, and we'll see if anything comes of it."

They agreed to follow his advice and then left him to go to the engine house of Mazeppa No. 2. Very few of the members were there, as all of them worked for a living. Tom was talking with one of the boys when an elderly woman came in and asked:

"Is Mr. Hazen here?"

"Yes," said Ben Stewart. "This is Tom Hazen."

She came up to Tom, looked him in the face for nearly a full minute, after which she said:

"Pardon me, sir. I wanted to get your face on my memory so I could never forget it. I've got it now. I am a poor woman and can give nothing but my prayers for what you did last night. Oh, I shall never cease to pray for Heaven's blessings on your head!" and she seized his hand and covered it with tears and kisses.

Tom and the others took off their hats, and she continued:

"You saved me from a horrible death last night, and then encountered that maniac to save my daughter—my only child. We lost everything. Have nothing left in the wide world, not even a change of clothing. But you saved our lives, and we are grateful."

"Madam, give me your name," Tom said, as she turned to leave.

"My name is Mrs. Raines, and my daughter is named Dollie. A neighbor two doors west of the house that was burned has given us shelter. Dollie works in the factory on Dover street and can earn enough to feed us."

Tom wrote her name and address in a little notebook and said:

"I'll call and see you soon."

"Dollie wants to see and thank you ever so much," she said, turning and leaving the engine house.

"Boys, we must help her," Tom said, gazing after her. "She is a heartbroken woman if I ever saw one."

"That she is, and we can do a good deal for her if we try," and Ben Stewart brushed tears from his eyes with his sleeve as he spoke.

"Of course we can, and we must," put in Tom. "I'm going back to the Carlton House and make Mr. Morton put up something for her. He was insured and she was not."

"Yes, that's so. You see him, Tom, and make him come down."

"Better wait till to-night," suggested Ben. "It would be better than to go now."

"I believe you are right. I will wait till evening," and so he did.

In the evening Dan Allen came to the engine house, having been fixed up all right at the hospital. The boys crowded around him and shook his hand.

"How is Jack?" they all asked him.

"Jack is doing well, and may get out to-morrow," he replied.

"Good—good! We'll have a jollification when he comes."

Quite a number of citizens came in to congratulate the young firemen, and one said:

"The ladies are going to present you a silk banner, on which will be worked the names of those whose lives were saved last night."

"That will make trouble," said Tom, shaking his head.

"In what way?"

"Some of the Vigilants ran up the ladder and brought down several women."

"Yes, after your boys had gone in and brought them out."

"True; but they had to be brought down before they were safe," returned Tom.

"I guess the ladies will do all hands justice," remarked one of the citizens.

"I hope they will. But I want to raise some money for Mrs. Raines. She and her daughter lost everything they had last night."

"Very good; here, put me down for ten dollars," said the citizen, handing Tom a bill.

"Yes, here's another for me."

"And here's a five for me," and a dozen men paid in over sixty dollars in less than five minutes.

Tom wrote down every name and the sum paid by each, and then said to those about him:

"I am going to the Carlton House and see how much I can raise there. It will take several hundred dollars to fix 'em up in another home."

When he entered the hotel, he asked the landlord if he could canvas the guests for subscriptions.

"Yes, my boy, and here's a tenner to start with."

"Thank you, sir," and he went among the guests and citizens, and soon he was surrounded by a crowd, all eager to give something and shake his hand.

Al Morton was there, and took four well-known citizens aside, to whom he said:

"See here, if you want your money to go to that poor woman, send it to her by one who will give it to her."

"Why, what do you mean?" one asked. "Isn't he honest?"

"Let me tell you something, and then you can judge for yourself," and he told them about the detectives finding the diamond ring in Hazen's clothes that morning and its return to its owner, adding:

"We can't prosecute him under the circumstances, you know. He is brave enough, and all that, but that's all."

After that no more money was given Hazen in the hotel that eveneing. Tom noticed that he was eyed suspiciously by many.

"Ah!" he thought. "Al Morton has told that story of the diamond ring. I'll wait till I have my proofs and then his father will have to spend some money to keep him out of jail."

Half an hour later he told some of those about him that he would go and give what money he had received to Mrs. Raines, adding:

"The sooner she gets it the happier she will be and the better she will sleep."

"Yes, but you had better give it to her to-morrow," suggested some one in the crowd.

"No, I will go to-night."

Al Morton stepped out of the hotel and held a whispered confab with a man on the sidewalk. The man hurried away, and Al returned to the crowd in the hotel. Ten or fifteen minutes later Tom and Ben Stewart left together to go and see the Widow Raines.

CHAPTER IV.—Through the Flames.

When they had gone but a few blocks, Ben said to Tom:

"Let's go by my home and get something to defend ourselves with. That's a rough neighborhood, you know."

"What have you got?" Tom asked.

"I've got clubs and slungshots."

Ben's father was a policeman, and he had quite a collection of such things on hand, taken from parties arrested during a service of several years. Tom laughed and went with him, as it was not far out of their way, and so each one got a regulation slungshot with a cord attached to keep it from flying from the hand.

"I don't think we'd have any use for them once in ten years," Tom remarked.

"And yet we might," returned Ben. "No harm in having 'em, anyway."

"No, of course not."

When they turned the corner of the Carlton hat factory, Ben said:

"This is the tough part just below us here."

"Yes, I know."

"Halt—hands up!" hoarsely ordered one of two men, stepping out from under the dark shadows of the big factory.

Both boys were startled.

"Hands up!" hissed the man in front of Tom, thrusting the muzzle of a pistol in his face.

Tom had the slungshot in his hand at the moment, the cord round his wrist. He raised both hands above his head and brought the slungshot down against the man's left temple with such force as to drop him to earth like a log. Ben let his fall plump on his man's nose, crushing it and sending him reeling backward.

Crack! Crack! Maddened with pain and dazed, the second man fired twice. But his bullets went wide of the mark, and Ben, who was game all the way through, sprang forward and dealt him another blow full in the face. As each slungshot had nearly a pound of lead in the business end of it, a blow from one of them was a thunderbolt when well aimed.

"Give him another, Ben!" exclaimed Tom, springing forward and giving the would-be robber a blow on the shoulder.

He aimed at his head, but the man dodged in time to save himself. He had dropped his revolver, and then, seeing his pal was knocked out, he took to his heels and ran with all his speed.

"I've got his pistol!" exclaimed Ben, as he picked up the revolver.

"Hold on to it, then."

Clang! Clang! Clang! At the first stroke they both ran with all speed for the engine house of Mazeppa No. 2.

"It's in the Fifth Ward, Tom!" Ben said.

"Yes—hurry!"

They reached the engine house just as the fire engine was going out.

"Hooray! Here's Tom!"

Tom dashed in, seized his helmet and trumpet, threw off his coat and put on his red shirt. Then he sprang away like a deer to overtake the fire engine. They were both good runners, and overtook the others when within two blocks of the fire. It was a big store in the center of a row of business houses, four stories high. The janitor and his family lived on the top floor, and their retreat was cut off by the flames below. The stores on either side were but two stories high.

"Here with the ladders!" called Tom through his trumpet, in front of the store on the right.

A ladder was quickly run up to the roof, and Tom and Dan Allen ran up it like two cats.

"Send up another ladder!" Tom called, and a second ladder was pushed up to the roof. There it was immediately run up to the roof of the burning store, and Tom and Dan hurried up there.

The janitor had his wife and two children out on the roof. She was a two hundred-pounder, and was running about the roof wringing her hands and screaming at the top of her voice.

"Attend to your wife," Tom said to the janitor, "and we'll get the two children down all right."

The two young firemen each seized a child and ran down the ladder with it and gave it in charge of other firemen, who hurried down to the street with them. Tom looked up and saw the janitor vainly pleading with his wife to go down the ladder. She had never done such a thing in her life, and fully believed it certain death for her to undertake it.

"Come, Dan," Tom called. "We must go up and help him."

They both ran up to where the janitor was struggling with the frantic woman. She was wringing her hands and screaming with all her might. The flames were now coming up through the scuttle with fiery fury. Tom placed his trumpet close to her ear, and yelled:

"Shut up or burn up!"

She came near falling off the roof in her consternation. But she shut up at once.

"Go down, quick! You have no time to lose!"

"My children! Oh, my children!"

"They are safe down on the street with friends."

She started to go down, and on every rung she had to stop to scream. Being so heavy, the long ladder swayed and sagged under her movements. But she finally succeeded in reaching the lower roof, and to the amazement of the firemen down there refused to go down the ladder which led to the street. She broke away from them and ran over a half dozen roofs to the end of the block.

"Let her go!" Tom called out to them.

But they had followed her two roofs away ere he called. Just a moment later there was an explosion below, and the roof on which the ladder rested caved in and the ladder fell with it. A groan came up to Tom and Dan from the crowd below, for they seemed to be entirely beyond human aid.

"Tom, we are lost!" Dan called out to him.

"There's another side," Tom replied, going across the roof to the other side.

To his amazement the roof of the store on that side was in a blaze.

"This looks bad for us, Dan," Tom said very coolly. "But we won't roast if we can help it."

"No; but can we help it?"

"I don't know," and Tom shook his head. "To jump is to die, and to stay here is to roast."

He walked over to the front end of the building and gazed down at the multitude in the street. It was a sea of upturned faces. This time they did not call to him. They could see no hope of escape for the two brave boys, so they gazed up in grief and horror. The flames burst through the two lower roofs on either side, and they were coming through in many places on the roof under their feet.

"Tom—Tom!" cried Dan. "There's a dozen telegraph wires lying across this roof going to either end of the block."

Tom wheeled round and gazed at the wires. The building on which they stood was the highest by two stories of all in the block, hence there was a sharp decline on either side.

"Dan. we can save ourselves!" he cried. "If we can find something that can stand the friction we can slide clear down to that third roof!"

"If we could stand the heat! The flames actually reach the wires now!"

"Here's some old wire!" and Dan sprang forward to a corner where the linemen had tossed aside some remnants of wire months before.

Tom seized it, bent it and then sprang forward and looped it over four of the telegraph wires. Dan did the same with another coil, each doubling four times. That done, Tom ran to the front and sang out through his trumpet to the crowd below:

"We are going to slide over on the wires! Send help to the roof of the third house!"

A groan came up from the crowd below, for the flames were now above the wires. The two brave boys ran back to the wires and stood under them.

"Dan!"

"Tom!"

Their hands met in a firm grasp.

"It's our only chance, Dan!"

"Yes, our only chance!"

"Come on, then!" and Tom held on to his loop and sprang over the roof—over the seething caldron of fierce flame—and quickly disappeared from sight.

CHAPTER V.—In Which Tom Does a Good Deed and Is Locked Up.

Never before in the annals of conflagrations was a multitude of spectators so thrilled with horror and suspense as were those in Carlton that night when Tom Hazen and Dan Allen slid along the telegraph wires through a seething mass of red flame. Strong men shuddered and many women shrieked and fainted. The terrible suspense lasted but a few seconds, though they seemed like minutes to people holding their breath as if unable to breathe.

Quick as a flash the two brave boys shot through the red-hot flames and reappeared on the roof of the third building, which had not as yet been caught by the devouring element. Then

came hoarse yells of joy from below, drowning even the crackling roar of the conflagration. Men fell on each other's necks in wild exultation.

"Hooray! Hooray! There they are, they are saved! Whoop! Whoop!"

But their clothes were ablaze and hair badly singed. Bill Saxton turned a stream of water on them which fell in a fine shower all about them. Tom turned and hugged Dan in his joy.

"Oh, it was a close call, Tom!" said Dan.

Four of the boy firemen ran up the ladder to them and again a great shout greeted them as they shook hands all around. Tom went to the front end of the building and sang out:

"Turn the water on the next houses!" and the order was obeyed.

The two descended to the street, and again wild shouts told how painfully the crowd had watched their narrow escape from a horrible death. But Tom did not relax his vigilance in watching the battle between fire and water. Trumpet in hand, he was here and there and everywhere, till at the end of two hours the flames were under control. Another hour was sufficient to put out every spark and remove all danger of any renewal of the conflagration. Wearied and smoke-begrimed, the young firemen prepared to return to their quarters. Tom had just given the order for them to start when two officers came up to him.

"You are Tom Hazen, are you?" one of them asked him.

"Yes," he replied.

"Well, we want you. Come along!"

"What's the matter?"

"Come along and find out," and one of the men laid hold of his arm.

"Hands off!" said Tom, pulling away from him.

Instantly both grabbed him and tried to handcuff him. Ben Stewart instantly suspected the cause of the arrest, and sang out:

"Here, boys; help Tom!"

With a rush the boy firemen swarmed around, over and on the two officers, hurled them to the ground and made mops of them.

"Help! Help!" cried both officers, and in a moment or two the wildest excitement prevailed.

"What's the trouble, boys?" the foreman of Vigilant Fire Company asked, as he and a dozen of his men came up.

"Hanged if I know," said one of the boys. "Somebody said for us to help Tom, and we pitched in."

"Two men arrested Tom," said one, "and no man can do that when he is on duty—not if we know it."

The two officers finally got on their feet and fled in the darkness of the night, and the boys crowded around Tom to inquire what it was all about.

"Hanged if I know," Tom replied, "unless it is for downing two men just before the fire bell rang."

"Who were they?" a dozen asked.

"Don't know. Ben and I went to the Carlton House to get some money for the Widow Raines, and were on our way to see her when we were halted by two men, who told us to hold up our hands. Luckily for us, we each had a slungshot, which we got at Ben's house on our way to the widow's. We just let 'em have it in their faces and downed 'em. Just a moment later the bell clanged and we hurried off."

"Well, they don't run you in for that, eh, boys?" sang out Bill Saxton.

"No!" came with a yell from every throat.

"Oh, I'll go and see about it in the morning," Tom said. "Let's all go home now. We have no more work to do here."

The boy firemen at once prepared to return to their quarters. They were all angry at the attempt to arrest Tom when on duty at a fire, and an attempt to do it again would have resulted in great damage to the arresting parties. Tom still had in his pocket the money which had been contributed to the Widow Raines, and on arriving at the engine house he told the boys about it.

"Somebody knew I had it," he said, "and laid for us to rob us. I think I'll stay here all night for fear the police may lay for me at my boarding house."

"And we'll stay here with you," Ben Stewart sang out, and the whole company said the same.

They slept on the floor and benches and horse blankets till sunrise. Then they arose and bathed hands and faces downstairs.

"Now, boys," called out Tom, "let's all call on the widow and give her this money. It will do her good to have us all go."

"Whoop! Just the thing!" some one cried; and they all prepared to go.

"We'll march two abreast," said Tom, and that way they started out.

The Widow Raines was up helping the poor family with whom she had found a temporary home. Tom knocked on the door, and Dollie Raines herself opened it. She was a very beautiful girl—regarded as the prettiest in all Carlton, though only a factory girl. She did not know Tom even by sight, and when he asked her if Mrs. Raines was in the house replied that she was.

"Will you please tell her that Tom Hazen and the members of Mazeppa No. 2 wish to see her?"

"Ah, you Tom Hazen?" she asked, looking him full in the face with an eager light in her eyes.

"Yes," he replied.

"I am Dollie Raines. Oh, I owe my life to you!"

Tom gazed at her in silence for a moment or two and then replied:

"Well, I am glad of it. It's the prettiest debt owing to me, and I am going to let you owe it," and he extended his hand to her with a laugh as he spoke.

"Oh, I shall never forget I owe it. But for you, I would not be here now."

Mrs. Raines came to the door on hearing her talking, and said:

"Oh, the fire boys are all here!"

"Yes, madam," Tom replied, lifting his hat. "We have all come to see you and Dollie. We have raised some money for you with which to buy furniture for a new home. Here it is," and he handed her the roll of bills.

"Oh, you brave boys!" came from her, and then tears followed with a choking exclamation of "God bless you!"

Tom and many of the boys hastily drew their sleeves across their eyes.

"Come, boys," he said, turning away, and in another moment they were silently marching

away, leaving the mother and daughter together in their joy. They went round by Tom's boarding house and left him there, after which each went to his own home.

Breakfast being ready, Tom ate in a hurry and then ran up to his room to change his clothes. He left the slungshot there and hastened out to call on the chief of police. He found that official at his desk, and was received with a very severe frown.

"Your company assaulted two policemen last night," the chief said.

"Yes, and that's what I came to see you about," Tom replied. "What did they want me for?"

"Word came to the captain here last night that you had nearly killed a man down on Bayard street."

"Did the man himself say so?"

"The man is in the hospital and unable to talk."

"Who then told it?"

"I really don't know. The captain got word of it and sent out two men to bring you in. The two officers came back looking as though they had been fighting a cyclone. Punishment for resisting an officer is very severe, you know."

"Yes; I am sorry it happened. They ought to have known better."

"Who—your boys?"

"No; your men."

"Ah!" and the chief's eyes flashed. "You will find it the other way, maybe."

Just then an officer came in and the chief ordered him to lock Tom up. Tom was dumfounded. But he made no resistance. He simply asked:

"What am I charged with?"

"I simply hold you till this matter can be investigated."

Tom said no more, and in another minute he was locked up in a cell.

CHAPTER VI.—A Dastardly Plot.

Let us go back to the two men who attempted to hold up Tom Hazen and Ben Stewart while on their way to see Widow Raines. The reader will remember that just as Tom and Ben downed them the great fire bell clanged, and the two young firemen sprang away to their post of duty, leaving the two villains completely knocked out. The man Tom had hit lay on the sidewalk like one dead. The blow had fallen on his temple and had knocked him senseless.

The other man had been hit on the nose, just halfway between the end of it and the eyes, crushing in the bone and making an utter wreck of it. But he did not lose his presence of mind, save but a few moments. By this time the two boys were gone, and he was left alone with his companion. The two pistol shots had been heard by others, and people came running in that direction.

"Jim, Jim!" called the man, stooping and shaking his companion. "Get up and come away!"

But Jim was like a dead man, and the other one growled out:

"Done for, as I'm a sinner!" and then sprang away, going direct across the street to avoid meeting those he heard coming.

A half dozen men came along and one stumbled over the man on the ground and fell.

"Hello! Here's a man down! Strike a match, somebody!"

One struck a match and held it close to the face of the unknown.

"This man has been killed!" exclaimed the man with the match.

"Yes, and we heard the shots," said another of the party.

"Call the police."

"What is it?" demanded a voice behind them.

"Here's the police!" exclaimed one, as two officers crowded forward.

One held his lantern so as to cast the light on the prostrate man's face and remarked:

"I don't think he is dead. Call an ambulance."

The other officer hastened to a signal station and called an ambulance. In ten minutes the ambulance came, and the unconscious man was placed in it and driven away. The two officers then made inquiries among those present to try to find out all they could about it. No one knew anything more than they had heard two shots a minute or two before the fire bell clanged. They went back to report the case to the captain of the station. In the meantime young Al Morton was at the Carlton House paying court to his pretty cousin, Miss Dora Pelham, whose life Tom Hazen had saved. She was sufficiently recovered from the shock of that terrible night to sit up and move about the sumptuous apartments occupied by the Mortons. Al and his sister were with her when a servant brought up a message from the office below, to the effect that a man there wished to see him personally. Al excused himself and went downstairs to the clerk's office.

"Where's the man who wants to see me?" he asked of the clerk.

"There he is," replied the clerk, as he pointed to a young man of rather doubtful appearance, who was standing with his back toward the office.

Al went up to him, looked at him for a moment or two, wondering who he was. He was a total stranger to him. But he said, touching him on the arm:

"I am Al Morton. Did you send up for me?"

"Yes," replied the young man. "Come out on the piazza, please," and he led the way out, followed by Al.

When clear of any third party the young man stopped, turned to Al and said in a half whisper:

"Bryan is hurt and wants to see you at once."

"Hurt, did you say?"

"Yes, and wants to see you."

"How is he hurt?"

"Somebody hit him on the nose and ruined it forever."

"When?"

"Oh, half an hour ago or so."

"Wait till I get my overcoat and cane and I'll go with you."

Young Morton turned and re-entered the hotel, leaving the other waiting for him on the piazza. When he reappeared he ran down the steps, saying to the oth

"Come on.

The other followed, and soon they turned and walked hurriedly in the direction of the west side of the town. It was the rough side of Carlton, the home of the poverty-stricken portion of the city. They halted in front of a dingy old frame house. The guide produced a key, by means of which he effected an entrance. Al followed him inside, and the door was closed again. They made their way along a passage to the rear of the house to a door on the left. It was pushed open, and there, on a rude cot, lay a man whose face was swathed in bandages. The guide left him there and returned to the front door.

"Why, what has happened, Bryan?" Al asked, as he went up to the side of the cot.

"Oh, I'm ruined!" was the reply, in a husky tone of voice, "and Jim is in the hospital more dead than alive."

"Who did it?"

"Those two young whelps had slungshots, and when we told 'em to hold up their hands they did so, but they came down again and we got it in the face. I am ruined for life."

"Good heavens! What's to be done?" and Al Morton was white as a sheet as he spoke.

"I think Jim is done for—his skull cracked. Go and have Hazen arrested for murder, naming Jim as the victim. The ring matter will be motive enough, and that will do the business for him. I can appear as a witness against him."

"Yes—yes, I see. I think that will settle him forever. I'll go and see the police at once. But is Jim done for, do you think?"

"He seemed like a dead man, and they took him away like one."

"If he should be alive, he ought to be posted as to what to say."

"Yes, that's so. I'll see him in the morning. Send me $100 in the morning early."

"One hundred!"

"Yes. I've got to pay a doctor and have good attention."

"That's pretty steep."

"You wouldn't have my nose for ten thousand, would you?"

"No, nor for a million. I'll send you the money," and Al turned and left the room. The guide met him at the front door and saw him off.

Joe and Jim Bryan confessed to be private detectives, and had an office in a cheap quarter of the city. Young Al Morton had once employed them in some shady transaction, and now had engaged them in a plot to ruin Tom Hazen. The police knew nothing wrong of them, but did not recognize them as detectives at all. On his way back to the hotel, Al passed a policeman whom he happened to know.

"Have you heard of the attempt to murder down on Bayard street?" he asked him.

"Yes. I saw the man and sent him to the hospital," was the reply.

"Have you got the murderer?"

"No—don't know who he is."

"I think I do," and then he told the story of the diamond ring, adding:

"I am sure it is Tom Hazen's way of putting a dangerous witness out of the way. Run him in and get the credit of it. If he is not the one, no harm will be done, you know."

Al went on and the officer at once began to see a chance to distinguish himself and get in line of promotion. He walked along his beat till he met the other one who was with him when Jim Bryan was sent to the hospital. It did not take him long to tell the story young Morton had given him.

"Let's run him in," he suggested.

"He's at the fire," said the other.

"Take him when the fire is over."

"We'll be off post then."

"Yes, and all the more credit to us," replied the other.

They thus arranged the matter and undertook to carry it out. But instead of a prisoner, they carried numerous bruises to the station and told the captain how they got them. The captain sent up to the hospital to see what the wounded man had to say. But the blow on his head made him still hazy, and he could tell nothing.

Thus matters stood, when Tom called on the chief of police the next morning and was locked up by that official's orders. Ten minutes later it was known to the boy firemen that Tom was in a cell at police headquarters, and Bill Saxton at once went to see the chief of the fire department about it. The chief was amazed, and at once sent a lawyer to take charge of the case. The lawyer called to see him, and Tom told him his story.

"Ah, that man in the hospital is the robber, then?" the lawyer said.

"Yes; at least he tried to be. Ben Stewart and I happened to have weapons ready for them and thus saved ourselves and the money we were taking to Mrs. Raines."

"Well, we'll secure that fellow and see what he has to say about it. But you say there were two of them?"

"Yes, and the other one is hurt, too," Tom said.

"I'll see if we can find him," and the lawyer left him to go to the hospital.

To his astonishment he recognized the wounded man as Detective Bryan, a private detective, whom he had once examined as a witness in court. But Jim Bryan was yet unconscious, the blow on his temple having been a hard one. The lawyer came away and at once procured a warrant for the arrest of both the Bryans. The one in the hospital was safe enough, but the other one was not to be found. He placed the warrant in the hands of a constable, not a policeman, and told him to lose no time in bagging his man.

The constable soon found people who knew the Bryans, and two hours later Joe Bryan was a prisoner. He was all broke up over his arrest, and lost no time in sending for Al Morton again. Al hastened to the station house, pale and nervous, and asked permission to see Bryan. He was shown to Bryan's cell at once.

"They have jugged me," Bryan said.

"So I see. But what is it for?"

"The warrant charges me with an attempt to rob Tom Hazen last night."

"Well, I'll send a lawyer to take charge of your case, and will pay all the bills. But don't send for me again. Send for him. I don't want to get mixed up in it. If I do, I'll be a ruined man."

"I won't say a word."

"Well, here's the money I promised to send you this morning," and Al gave him a roll of bills as he spoke.

Bryan took the bills and concealed them about his person.

Al then left the station house, and as he passed out the front door he almost ran against Tom Hazen and the chief of the fire department. The chief had just bound himself for Tom to bring him into court whenever wanted.

CHAPTER VII.—An Unexpected Meeting.

Two days passed and Jim Bryan came to his senses in the hospital. The blow on his head had come near being the death of him. As it was, he was still in a bad way, and the doctor thought he should do very little talking. He did not know he had been placed under arrest, and asked that his brother Joe be sent for.

"He is hurt almost as badly as you are," the doctor told him.

"Ah! Sorry for that," and he turned his face to the wall and remained silent after that. He feared to make any statement until he had seen Joe lest he endangered both. But Joe soon got out of the station through the effort of the lawyer Al Mortan had sent to him. He lost no time in seeing Jim. The surgeon in charge gave permission with a warning, and he was shown into the ward where the patient lay. They hardly knew each other. Jim's head and Joe's face were in bandages.

"Are you Jim?" Joe asked cautiously, in a half whisper.

"Yes; are you Joe?" came from Jim.

"Yes, all except my nose. That will never be as it was again," and then he looked around the room to see if they were all alone. Leaning forward, he asked:

"Have you said anything yet?"

"No, not a word."

"Then we are all right. You must tell this story: We were attacked in the dark and nearly killed. We didn't know who did it till we heard Tom Hazen had claimed that he and a friend were attacked at the same place. Having knowledge of a robbery committed by him, we believe he plotted to kill us and thus save himself, and have had him arrested."

"Have you had him arrested?"

"Yes; on the charge of trying to kill us both. Morton backs us and has engaged counsel for us. He had me arrested, too."

"What for?"

"On suspicion of trying to rob him."

"Then they'll arrest me, too."

"Yes, very likely. Just stick to this story and we'll win sure. Oh, I'll fix him for this!" and he laid a hand tenderly on the bandages that covered his broken nose.

After staying out the time allowed him, Joe took leave of Jim and went away. Days passed, and things quieted down somewhat. No fires occurred to draw the firemen out, and they were all at work in their various occupations. But the boy firemen had a grievance, and could talk of nothing else when they met of evenings at their hall. They were all like a band of brothers, and the cause of one was the concern of all.

They could not understand why the governor's daughter had never thanked Tom for having saved her life. Mr. Morton had done so, it was true, but she had not. One evening word was sent to them that a party of friends would pay them a visit at the hall on the following evening.

"That is a hint for us to brush up, boys," said Tom to those present.

The next evening the hall looked like a bower of evergreens and flowers, while the engine downstairs was an immense bank of roses on wheels. By eight o'clock young people of both sexes came trooping in, and the young firemen gave them a cordial reception. The Widow Raines and Dollie ran up to Tom to greet and thank him. Tom looked at Dollie, and thought he had never seen anything half so beautiful in all his life. She was dressed in a way to enhance her beauty tenfold. He bowed again, his eyes riveted to her blushing face.

"We are all glad to see you here, Miss Dollie," he said.

"I am more than glad to come and thank every one of you for what you have done for us," she replied, laying a little brown hand on his arm.

Ben Stewart led a party downstairs and showed them the engine, leaving Tom by the side of Dollie Raines, charmed almost to helplessness. A few minutes later the musicians came and the hall was cleared for a dance. Tom led Dollie out on the floor and waltzed round and round the room with her. When he led her to a seat he found that many ladies and gentlemen had come in while he was dancing. He excused himself to Dollie and went to look after others.

In the crowd he noticed an elderly lady and a young, girlish figure by her side, standing near a window. There was something about the young lady's face that seemed a little bit familiar, and yet he could not recollect her. He went up to the elderly lady and said:

"Madam, come with me to the other end of the hall and I'll get seats for you."

"Thank you," she replied, and they both followed him. He procured seats for them.

He turned to the young lady and said:

"I can't tell you how much we appreciate this visit from our friendz."

"Oh, if you would keep open house one night in each week," she replied, as she took the proffered seat, "I think you would see us here quite often."

"I will tell the boys that," he said.

"How is it that Mazeppa No. 2 is always first at a fire?" she asked.

"I suppose it's owing to youth and enthusiasm," he replied.

"Are not the old firemen just a little bit jealous of Mazeppa's successes?"

"Indeed, I cannot say. We do our best to beat 'em, and sometimes we succeed. We think we have a right to feel proud of our success."

"You certainly have. How many lives have you saved, Mr. Hazen?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Don't call on the young ladies you save?"

"Not unless I am well acquainted with them. It would be cheeky on my part to do so. I did call on the Widow Raines the other day, but I went to give her some money our friends had subscribed for her. She lost everything in that fire, you know."

"Yes, so I heard. You were dancing with her daughter just now, were you not?"

"Yes."

"She is very beautiful."

"She is, indeed. Do you dance?"

"Yes; I am fond of it."

"Will you honor me with this one?"

"With pleasure," and she arose from the chair and went out on the floor with him.

No one in the hall seemed to know her, and many wondered who she was as she waltzed round the circle with him. She was a very graceful dancer and Tom was proud of her. When he led her to her seat again he asked for her name. She looked up at him in silence for at least two minutes, and then said:

"I am Dora Pelham."

Tom started as if stung. She was the governor's daughter! He had saved her life and been accused of stealing a diamond ring from her. He turned white and red by turns. She reached out and laid a hand on his arm, saying:

"I came here to see and tell you that I believe in your honesty, and even though you did not answer my letter."

"Why, I never received any note from you," he said.

Clang! Clang! The great fire bell struck, and instantly the wildest confusion reigned in the hall. Young firemen, who were waltzing round the room, flung their fair partners aside and made a wild rush for the engine room below. Like a huge leviathan bedecked with flowers the engine shot out into the street and went off like a roaring thunderbolt in the direction of the fire in the second district. The fire was in a business block and among a lot of frame buildings which were burning like tinder when the firemen arrived.

The chief of the fire department saw the danger that threatened that part of the city, and directed the main efforts of the firemen to prevent its spreading.

"Cut through the roofs and flood the stores on each side!" was the order he gave, and the daring young foreman of Mazeppa No. 2 was the first on the roof of the store on the right.

Trumpet in hand, he gave orders in a quick, terse way that told how well he knew what he was doing. Suddenly a barrel of oil exploded in the store below him, and the roof heaved up and sank down with a terrific crash, carrying him with it. A cry of horror rent the air as a cloud of dust, smoke and sparks went up from the wreck.

Tom Hazen was the only one to go down with that roof. And it was witnessed by Dora Pelham, the governor's daughter. She had left the ball and entered a carriage and was driven to the scene of the fire. Alighting near the burning building, she saw the Morton carriage also on the scene, with Al and his sister in it. She had seen the roof fall and had recognized Tom Hazen as the man who had saved her life. It had been a case of love at first sight on her part, and now she had witnessed, so she thought, his doom. Soon she saw the fire chief near, and hastened to ask about Tom's fate. The chief stated that Tom had nine lives, like a cat, and would probably get out of it somehow. But that did not satisfy Dora, and she started for the front of the building, which was threatening to collapse. Just then a tremendous shout arose and Tom was seen clinging to a wire which stretched across to a telegraph pole across the street. Dora, on seeing him, cried: "Save him!" and broke away from the chief and dashed toward the burning building. The chief made a dash for her, picked her up in his arms and carried her to the Morton carriage.

CHAPTER VIII.—Al Learns His Fate and Disappears.

On reaching the carriage, he said to young Morton:

"Miss Pelham wishes to return to the hotel. Please take charge of her."

"Certainly. I've been waiting here for her," and Al opened the carriage door for her.

"Tell me, is Tom safe?" she asked of the chief, with a coolness that broke Al all up.

"Yes; perfectly safe."

"Then we'll go home," and she leaned back in the seat and utterly ignored her cousin.

Al was in no mood to talk to her. He saw she was excited, and in a humor to quarrel with him.

"Why don't you be a fireman?" she asked him.

"It is not a gentleman's calling," was the reply.

"Oh, indeed! I find quite a number of gentlemen among them, though."

"That's more than I have been able to do."

"Perhaps you have never tried."

"I have no desire, I'm sure."

His coolness somewhat puzzled her. She was trying to punish him by pretending to be quite in love with all firemen, hoping he would do or say something to give her a chance to crush him with the knowledge she had of the diamond ring business.

But he seemed to be afraid to say anything to irritate her, and in a few moments more they were at the hotel. He sprang out and assisted her and his sister out. The two girls ran in and up to their rooms.

The next day Al Morton, driven to desperation by the occurrence of the evening before, made up his mind to find out how he stood with the fair Dora. He watched for the chance to speak to her alone, and said:

"Cousin Dora, I am at a loss to know why you treated me as you did last night. I love you more than my own soul, and want you to be my wife. Will you?"

"No!" she said, very firmly. "You are not the sort of man I could love, even were you a king of a vast kingdom."

He turned pallid—ashen hued—and leaned against a chair for support.

"Your conduct since the fire has caused me to despise you," and she almost hissed the words at him.

"What have I done to merit your displeasure, cousin?" he asked, suddenly pulling himself together.

"You really don't know, do you?"

"I certainly do not."

"You have not forgotten about this ring, have you?" and she held up her hand as she spoke, displaying the splendid cluster of diamonds.

"No, I have not," he replied.

"Then I need say no more."

"Did I do wrong to have it recovered and brought back to you?"

"No; you did wrong to take it from me and try to make it an instrument for the ruin of another man," and she looked him full in the face as she spoke.

He winced slightly, but a moment later asked:

"What are you hinting at, cousin?"

"Oh, my, how dull you are!" and a sarcastic smile played about her mouth.

"Did any one tell you such a story as that?" he asked, trying a cool bluff on her.

"Cousin Al," she said, "I don't wish to have a quarrel with you. I know the whole truth about the ring now, and in order to end the matter, I will tell you that Mr. Delmar, the chief of the fire department, and five other good men are ready to swear that they saw this ring on my hand after I was placed in your arms the night of the fire, hence Mr. Hazen could not have taken it before that time, and he never saw me again after that. The men who pretended to have found it in his pocket took it there with them. If you will tell me why you did such a thing, I will try to forgive you."

"I never did such a thing. Those men swore to a lie."

She turned away and left the room, leaving him there as though rooted to the spot. He was in the throes of a terrible desperation, and a gleam of savage fiendishness was in his eyes.

"It is all over!" he hissed. "She shall have reason to hate as well as despise me," and with that he turned and left the room.

"What in the world is the matter with brother, Dora?" Al's sister asked, a few minutes later. "He has been talking to you, and now he looks like death in the face. Did he propose to you?"

"Yes, and I said no. I am not in love with him, by any means."

"Oh, he looks awful. I am afraid he'll do something awful."

"I don't think he'll do himself any harm, whatever else he may do."

"Did he and you have a quarrel?"

"I don't know that it might be called a quarrel. It certainly was no lovers' quarrel, for I am not, and never have been, in love with him."

"I am so sorry for him."

But as the fair Dora did not express any sympathy for him, his sister suspected that there was a really serious quarrel on hand. She went in search of him to get as much of the truth out of him as possible. He was not in his room, so she sent downstairs for him. Word came back to the effect that he was not there, and no one knew where he was.

"I'll wait till I see him," she said to herself, "before saying anything more about it to her."

She expected to see him at noon, but he did not make an appearance at the dinner table, and at once her imagination began to get in some fine work. What if, in his despair over the rejection of his suit, he had taken his life? The thought nearly crazed her.

"Oh, Dora!" she said to her cousin. "What if he has killed himself? Many men have done so for love of women, you know!"

Dora burst out laughing, and her cousin was shocked at her heartlessness, and told her so.

"I am not heartless, dear," Dora replied. "I laugh because I well know that nothing on earth could make him do any harm to himself. He thinks too much of his sacred person to even pinch himself," and she again laughed with an abandon that caused her cousin to protest.

"Wait and see," Dora said, and then changed the conversation.

That evening Al was still missing and his sister became still more alarmed. She went to her mother and told her of her fears. Of course the mother became alarmed, too, and went at once to her husband.

"It is not an uncommon thing for him to absent himself from home for several days at a time," the banker said, "so we won't worry about it until a reasonable time has passed without hearing from him."

Her fears were allayed for the time being, and the matter was dropped. But the young sister did not cease to let her imagination have full play, and so became a prey to all the fears that the feminine mind is heir to.

CHAPTER IX.—Shots in a Fire—A Mystery.

Several days passed and still young Morton had not been seen or heard from by any of his friends. As a matter of course, the family kept their anxiety a secret from the public. Nobody seemed to miss him save a few youths of his particular set, and none of them was in any way uneasy about him. In the meantime, a magnificent solid silver trumpet came by express from New York to Thomas Hazen. On it was engraved:

"From Dora Pelham
"To Thomas Hazen,
"Foreman, Mazeppa No. 2."

"Say, boys," Tom exclaimed, as he exhibited the beautiful work of art to the young firemen, "just look at this!"

They crowded around him and examined the trumpet with the deepest interest. They felt that was as complimentary to the entire company as it was to him. Not one envied him its possession.

"Oh, but it's a daisy!" exclaimed Jack Thorn.

"So it is," said Ben Stewart.

"And so is she," put in Dan Allen.

"So say we all of us!" cried half the crowd present.

"Let's ask her to ride with us on our parade, boys," suggested Dan.

"Yes, let's do it. Lord, but if she does, we'll just scoop all the honors," and Jack Thorn became very enthusiastic over the matter.

"Just hold up, boys," cautioned Tom. "Miss Pelham is able to give us this thing because she is rich and the daughter of the governor of the state. The others whose lives we have saved would do as much, too, were they able; but they are not. But we must not ask her to ride with us and not invite the others. That wouldn't do."

"You are right, Tom," said Ben Stewart. "I

don't think she is too proud to go with the others."

"I don't, either," Tom replied. "She is the bravest girl I ever met."

That evening the entire company met at the engine hall to prepare for the coming parade of all the firemen of the city. They were engaged in appointing committees, when the great fire bell rang out an alarm for the Fifth Ward. Instantly every one was at his post and the engine and ladder truck went careening down the street like a roaring torrent. It was a long run to the scene of the fire, which proved to be in an old building occupied by some very poor families. The flames spread rapidly and had a good headway ere the firemen arrived.

"They are all out except an old man upon the third floor!" called out a workingman with a child in each arm.

"Up with the ladder, boys!" Tom sang out through his trumpet.

Then he turned to the workingman and asked:

"Which window?"

"Third one from the corner. There he is!"

They looked up and saw an old man with a long white beard appear at the window and wave his arms as though too much rattled to do anything else. With his usual impulsiveness Tom sprang forward and ran up the ladder with a squirrel-like agility. Ere he reached the window the white-haired old man had disappeared in the smoke of the room. Tom climbed in through the window and called out:

"Here, old man! This way for safety—quick!"

Crack! A pistol shot rang out and struck the silver trumpet Tom held in his left hand.

"Here! This way!"

Crack! A bullet crushed through Tom's leather hat. Tom quickly suspected another crank, and he fell heavily to the floor as if shot.

"That settled him!" he heard a voice say, and the next moment retreating footsteps were also heard.

"Well, you may roast for all I care!" said Tom, springing up and rushing for the window. "I don't want any more fooling with cranks," and he made his way down the ladder alone.

"Did you lose him?" Jack Thorn asked him.

"No. He's as crazy as a loon. He shot at me twice."

"The deuce! Let him burn. Somehow or other a lot of old fire cranks are hanging around Carlton."

Others came up to him and asked about the fate of the old man whom they had seen at the window.

"Hello! Look at your trumpet, Tom!" cried Dan Allen.

Tom held up his splendid new silver trumpet and found a ragged bullet hole on two sides of it.

"That fellow aimed right at my head," he remarked.

"Did you see him?"

"Not clearly."

"We heard the shots and thought they were some weapons heated by the fire."

As the building was an old one and all the occupants were out, the firemen devoted their time to preventing the flames from spreading. The news that an old man, who had shot twice at Tom Hazen, had been consumed in the fire spread all over the neighborhood, and the deepest interest was excited. At last a couple of men said:

"He was not roasted. We saw him get out by the rear window, letting himself down by a rope."

"Are you sure?" Tom Hazen asked them.

"Yes, for I know him. He has been here but three days."

"And he slid down by a rope?"

"Yes; we stood by and saw him come down."

"Well, I am going to find out something about this," said Tom, shaking his head. "I can't understand why he should want to shoot me."

"Oh, he was some old crank, I guess," remarked a member of the Vigilant Fire Company.

"Maybe he was; but he had sense enough to save himself after trying to kill me."

"Yes, it does look that way," assented the other.

The firemen kept at work to prevent the fire from spreading, and when it was all extinguished they returned to their quarters in a leisurely way. Tom was mad as a hornet over the spoiling of his beautiful trumpet by the bullet holes that had been made in it. Dora Pelham read an account of the shooting, and expressed a desire to see the trumpet again. Tom called at the hotel with it, and sent up his card. It came back with a verbal message that she did not wish to see him. He was astonished.

"Did she tell you to say that to me?" he asked of the servant to whom he had given his card.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well," and he turned on his heel and left the hotel.

At the engine hall he was in a very bad humor, for he was under the impression that somebody had lied to him.

"What's the matter, Tom?" Jack Thorn asked him.

He told him.

"She never sent you that message, Tom," Jack said.

"How do you know?"

"Because she ain't that kind of a girl. She thinks too much of you to give you a douche like that."

"Well, that's the report the hallboy made, anyway."

"Something is wrong, Tom," Jack remarked, shaking his head. "I'd find out about it if I were you."

"How can I?"

"See Miss Pelham herself."

"But how can I? I tried to last night, you know."

"Get some one else to see her, or else write to her."

"Ah! I'll write her a note!"

He procured pen and paper and soon had a note written, sealed and addressed to her. It was sent to the post office.

"I won't hear from her till to-morrow morning, if I hear from her at all," he said to himself. "I'll go and see Mrs. Raines about herself and Dollie riding with us on our parade. Mother and daughter would be a big card for us."

Early in the evening Tom started out to call on the Widow Raines and her daughter. It was a long walk from his boarding house, and he walked briskly in order to reach there at a reasonable hour. He found them both at home and

very glad to see him, and in a little while he had told how the boy firemen wanted them to ride on the ladder truck in the firemen's parade.

"Miss Pelham has been invited, too," he said, "so you will be in good company."

"The members of Mazeppa Fire Company are good enough company for us," said the widow.

"Thank you," Tom said. "Still, the governor's daughter is good company, too."

"Yes. But if she should be on the truck I'm afraid you boys could not see any one but her."

"I don't know about that," Tom replied. "Miss Dollie here is the better-looking of the two."

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Dollie. "Did you come all the way over here to say that?"

"No, I did not. I made the same remark up in the engine hall yesterday, and didn't dream I'd have a chance to say so before your face. All the boys in the company say the same thing."

Dollie laughed, but felt proud and happy over the compliment, for she was but a girl, after all, and no girl ever forgets a thing like that. She and her mother agreed to ride on the truck on the parade.

"Can you ride a horse, Miss Dollie?" Tom asked the young girl.

"Dear me, no!" she replied.

"Why do you ask?" the widow demanded.

"If she can, I was going to ask her and Miss Pelham to ride the two horses in front of the engine that day."

"Oh, my, she shall learn how to ride in time to do so," said the widow, eager to give Dollie a chance to be side by side with the governor's daughter.

After a pleasant visit he prepared to return to his boarding house. Just as he was about to leave, Mrs. Raines showed him a heavy cane, saying:

"This is for you. It is heavy, but you may have use for it some time."

"Thank you. I'll keep it because you gave it to me," and he bade them good night and left.

Only a few blocks from the house he perceived a man following him. Turning suddenly around, he confronted the man and accused him of following him. The man denied it and made a motion as if to draw a gun. Tom struck him with the cane and knocked him down, also knocking a wig from his head. A policeman now came up and asked Tom what the trouble was. Tom told him and showed him the wig. The policeman searched the man's pockets and found a revolver fully loaded. His beard was also false.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Tom, when the beard was pulled off. "It is Al Morton!"

"I will send for the patrol wagon and take him in," said the policeman, moving away.

Suddenly young Morton sprang up and dashed away. He had been playing possum. Tom yelled to the policeman and he came running back. Then they gave chase to the fugitive. Al Morton at the end of the block ran into the arms of another policeman, who held him until Tom and the officer came up. Matters were explained and Al was lugged off to the station house where the captain, after hearing the evidence, locked young Morton up in a cell.

Next morning Tom called at the hotel to see Miss Pelham. She met him in the ladies' parlor. She asked Tom why he did not call in answer to her letter, and when Tom told her that an attache of the hotel told him that Miss Pelham had refused to see him and he had gone away, she was greatly surprised and said she did not know he had called. He spent some time with her, and when he was leaving the hotel met Al Morton and his father coming in. His father had gone to the station-house early that morning to see his son.

CHAPTER X.—The Banker and His Hopeful Son.

On reaching the station house the banker gave his name to the captain and asked to be permitted to see his son. He was shown into the captain's private office, and Al was sent for. He had a frown on his face, for he was annoyed at the situation. Al did not know who he was to meet when he was ushered into the room. The pain of the blow he had received on the head still hurt him, and a lump half as big as an egg had risen there.

"What in the world have you been up to, Albert?" exclaimed his father, the moment he entered the room.

"I have been doing some detective work in disguise, and got into trouble aboutu it, that's all."

"What's the trouble between you and Hazen? We all feel very grateful to him!"

"We had a fight a little while before the fire at our home, and he has been doing all he could to ruin me ever since."

By reason of his wealth and influence, the banker was permitted to take Al home with him, promising to have him in court at nine o'clock

They both saw Tom as they entered the hotel, but did not say anything to him. The banker wished to keep matters quiet until he had consulted his lawyer. Early the next morning Dora Pelham sent for the landlord, told him of the failure of his clerks in sending Tom's card up to her, and insisted that thereafter all cards should be handed to her personally.

In the meantime Mr. Morton had sent for his lawyer to go with Al to the police court and then to push the law on Tom Hazen. The lawyer shook his head when he heard Al's story, and, turning to his father, said:

"My advice is that you get out of this case as easily as possible and then drop the matter."

"And not arrest Hazen?"

"No; if you do, you'll get the worst of it. But let's go to the police court and see what the situation is."

Tom was there when the three alighted from a carriage. Mr. Morton, who had once pledged him a lifelong friendship, gave him a scowling glance and passed into the courtroom. The policeman who had arrested Al corroborated Tom's story, and so the prisoner had no witness but himself. Cross-examination ruined him, and the case went against him. He was held in bail for a higher court. His father promptly gave bail for him, and they returned to the hotel together. That evening the Morton family were denouncing Tom Hazen in the severest terms before Dora Pelham.

"What do you think of him, dear?" Mrs. Morton asked her niece.

"I think him entirely innocent," was the reply.

"Indeed! And what do you think of Albert?"

"I think he is wrong—guilty of crime."

Mrs. Morton came near fainting on hearing that, and then poured out a flood of wrath on her niece for daring to speak so of her son—her Albert.

"You had better scold him instead of me, aunt," Dora said. "I am not in any danger, but he is. If you want to know more, I can tell you more."

"What do you know?" the mother demanded.

Then Dora told his mother everything, and cited the proofs of Al's guilt. Mr. Morton was dumfounded. He was hard-headed and entirely devoid of sentiment.

"If all that is true," he said to his wife, "a million dollars can't save him from State prison. The boy is a fool and knave combined."

"You can easily find out," Dora said. "I give you the names of six men who are witnesses. The chief of the fire department is one of them. Go and see him!"

"I will see Hazen myself," said the banker, "so don't say any more about it till I have talked with him."

"You can see him this evening," Dora said. "He is coming to see me and bring the trumpet with the bullet holes in it."

"I shall write to your father at once to send for you. You need some one to watch over you," said Mrs. Morton.

"If father sends for me I shall go, of course. But I'll tell him all about your model son."

That was a hard cut. Mrs. Morton was proud of the name and fame of Dora's father, her brother, and dreaded to have him know aught that would give him a bad opinion of one of her children. She did not make any reply, but arose and left the room. Dora waited for the expected visit of Tom Hazen, and when she received his card she quickly repaired to the ladies' parlor to receive him.

"Oh, you have brought the trumpet!" she said, as she took it from his hands and examined the bullet holes in it.

Mr. Morton came in ere he could say anything to her, and said:

"Pardon me for intruding, but my niece said I could see you, too. May I ask you a few questions?"

"As many as you please, sir," Tom replied.

In ten minutes the rich banker had the whole story, and was mad enough to horsewhip his hopeful son.

CHAPTER XI.—Tom Is Hurt Again, But Does Not Regret It.

Ten minutes were enough for him to learn all the facts, and the crestfallen banker asked:

"If he will apologize, will you let the matter stop at that?"

"Yes, if he will make a written one, stating what he apologizes for."

Morton bowed and left the room.

"Oh, but I am glad you did not yield to him!" Dora said as soon as her uncle left the room.

"I am glad you are not offended with me," Tom replied.

"On the contrary, I am more than pleased," she returned. "If Al is not promptly held in check he will come to some bad end."

Tom told her that the boys wanted her and Miss Dollie Raines to ride on the engine horses in the big parade, and she agreed. Suddenly the great fire bell struck, and Tom bounded to his feet. Dora sprang up, too, and threw the loop of the silk cord of the trumpet over his head, saying:

"Be prudent for—my sake."

Tom grasped her right hand in his and pressed it to his lips. Then with a bound he was away. He knew that Mazeppa No. 2 would come that way. In less than two minutes the roar of the fire engine was heard coming down tthe street. Tom waited in front of the hotel to join the boys as they came by. An old beggar woman, evidently very deaf, came toward him from the opposite side of the street.

"Go back! Go back!" Tom yelled at her, but she slouched forward right in front of the careering steeds.

"The old fool!" hissed Tom, and at the same moment the driver of the engine as well as the spectators cried out for her to go back. Suddenly Tom darted forward to save her. He caught her round the waist and fell to the stone pavement with her, and the engine barely missed them as it thundered by. A few seconds later the hook and ladder truck dashed by and passed out of sight.

"He must be hurt," said a spectator. "He hasn't moved since he fell."

At that moment a young woman who had seen all from the window of the ladies' parlor ran out and darted across the street—the first to reach the prostrate young fireman. It was Miss Pelham, and she ordered him carried into the hotel, and had him put into one of the best rooms in the house, and the regular physician was summoned. It proved to be a bad case of concussion of the brain, and not until the next morning did he come to in a way to know anything. The first one he saw was Dora Pelham, who sat by his bedside.

"Where am I?" he asked.

"In the Carlton House," she replied. "You were hurt last night, and they brought you in here."

"Why didn't they take me to the hospital?"

"I would not let them. I wanted to nurse you myself," and though she was pale from loss of sleep, she blushed red.

"And you have been here all night, have you not?"

"The doctor says you must not talk too much. A man with a broken head must keep quiet."

He smiled and gazed at her in silence for some minutes, and then asked:

"Will you let me say three words?"

"Yes, if you will keep quiet then."

"I love you."

Those were the three words, and when she heard them she leaned over and kissed him and said:

"I love you."

His hand sought hers, and a profound silence reigned in the room till the doctor came. A few

minutes later a servant came in and whispered to Dora:

"Your father has come, and wishes to see you."

CHAPTER XII.—The Governor and His Daughter.

On hearing that her father, the governor of the State, had arrived, Dora Pelham hastened to meet him. She found him in her aunt's room, of course, and was caught in his arms as quick as she could get to him.

"Are you really well, daughter?" he asked, holding her off at arm's length, and gazing at her with all the solicitude of an anxious father.

"Yes, father. I never felt better in all my life. How did you leave mother?"

"She is not well, and you must go to her as soon as possible," the governor replied.

"Then I'll go at once. I didn't know she was the least bit unwell. When will you leave, father?"

"At four P. M."

"I'll be ready by that time," and she hurried to her own room to look after the packing of her trunks.

"Aunt is at the bottom of this, I am sure. She telegraphed father to come for me, and mother is no more ill than I am. I am going to see about it at once," and she stopped packing her trunk to go in search of her father. She found him in consultation with her aunt—her father's sister. Said she:

"Father, who telegraphed you to come here for me?" Dora asked, and the abrupt question startled both her father and aunt.

"Why, who told you I had been telegraphed for?" her father asked.

"Don't ask any questions till you have answered mine. Did aunt or uncle telegraph for you?"

"Yes—I telegraphed to him," said her aunt defiantly.

"Indeed! Well, you can rest assured that I shall tell him all I know of your hopeful, who is at the bottom of all this."

"Why, what in the world is the matter?" exclaimed the governor, as Mrs. Morton burst into tears and left the room.

"I will tell you all, father," and in ten minutes she had told him all she knew of the performances of her cousin, Al Morton, since the burning of the Morton residence.

"Tell me, are you in love with this young fireman?" her father asked.

"I don't know whether it is gratitude or love. I have found him to be a gentleman and a brave man. He is really a boy yet—only about my own age, and has never presumed on his service to me. He has never called here save when I sent for him, once to thank him, and once to bring me the silver trumpet I gave him. I am sorry to say it, but aunt has not told you the truth about him."

"Well, pack up your things and we'll leave at four o'clock."

She returned to her room to resume the task of packing her trunks, aided by a maid. Her aunt came in and shut the door.

Turning upon her niece, she hissed:

"Dora Pelham, you have ruined my son! A week from now you will wish you had never been born! Your name will be a byword on the streets of Carlton!"

Dora was equal to the emergency.

"You are capable of making it so, aunt," she replied. "I think I shall regret more that you are my father's sister than anything else. You forget that you are actually pushing your son into the penitentiary."

Her aunt gasped for breath. Dora had cut her in a vital place. She was a woman to whom social position was everything, and here she was in danger of social ruin. The personification of selfishness herself, she could not forgive it in others. Mrs. Morton left the room and returned to her own, sent for the governor, who had gone downstairs to receive visits from the politicians. He sent word back that he would be up again as soon as possible. In the meantime Dora paid a visit to Tom after the doctor had dressed the wound on his head. She found Jack Thorn and Ben Stewart there.

"Oh, I am so glad you boys have come," she said, as she shook hands with each of them. "Tom was here last night, and when the fire bell clanged I said to him to be prudent for my sake, and he ran out and got hurt right before my eyes. Now if I was his wife, I'd give him a good scolding—that's what I'd do."

"Do you want to scold me?" Tom asked.

"Yes, indeed. I really think you deserve a good scolding."

"Well, if you'll promise to scold me, I'll marry you," said he, looking her full in the face.

She turned to Jack, saying:

"You hear him. Go and get a minister and just say Tom wants him. You and Ben shall be the only witnesses."

"Oh, Dora!" Tom murmured. "This is more than I could ever hope for. I am not dreaming, am I?"

"No, dear. You are wide awake," she replied.

Jack soon came back to report that a minister would soon be there. Half an hour later the minister came down and many guests rushed forward to ask how the young fireman was.

"I think he is doing very well," he replied.

"Is he near death?"

"No, I think not. On the contrary, he is the happiest man in the State just now. I married him to Miss Pelham a few minutes ago."

That was a bombshell in the big hotel. The news flew like flashes of lightning, and the minister disappeared. The governor was shocked, but kept perfect control of himself.

The firebell rang again that night, and the fire was at the Raines home. Mrs. Raines and Dolly were both saved by heroic work, the latter by Jack Thorn. As Jack was head over heels in love with Dolly and proposed marriage, Dolly accepted him, as she couldn't get Tom now, and the two were immediately married. News of the event soon reached Dora and Tom at the hotel, and it is unnecessary to add how pleased they were at the news.

The next day the door of Tom's room flew open, and in dashed Al Morton pistol in hand and the light of unreason in his eyes. Dora was also in the room. Tom sprang out of bed

and grappled with the maniac. Suddenly the revolver was discharged.

CHAPTER XIII.—The Ruin of Al Morton.

The sound of the pistol shot rang through the big hotel with a startling distinctness. Then a scream and a rush followed. The scream came from Dora Hazen. When Tom sprang forward and grappled with Al Morton she never moved or uttered a word. She stood like one dazed, gazing at them in a death struggle on the floor. Suddenly she saw Al press the muzzle of a revolver against Tom's side. Then she screamed, darted forward, and seized the weapon, wrenching it from his hand. It was at that moment that help came. Tom had the upper hand of him, but he was still struggling fiercely and yelling:

"I'll kill him! I'll kill 'em both!"

The guests separated them. Tom went back to look for Dora, but the wild shrieks that came from Al Morton told that he had lost his reason and had suddenly become insane. He found her standing near the mantel with the revolver still in her hand. She did not seem to be aware that she still had it.

"Dora, you saved my life," he said.

"Yes, Tom, and now you are mine more than ever," and that was the idea uppermost in her mind in the moment of greatest peril.

They remained in their apartment till friends came to inquire if either had been hurt, and then were told that Al was clean gone mentally, and his mother almost in a state of collapse.

"I am sorry for them," Tom said to the physician, who told him the news. "I am not hurt in the least, but it was a close call. One bullet went into the wall there, and another brought down a lot of plastering from the ceiling overhead," and he pointed to the places as he spoke.

But when the news reached the engine house of Mazeppa No. 2, the boys became greatly excited. They seemed to think that Al Morton's insanity was feigned for the purpose, and at last decided to send Jack Thorn and Bill Saxton to see Tom about it. Tom and Dora were seated in their little parlor with a couple of ladies who had called when Jack, Dollie, and Bill were shown in. The two brides ran into each other's arms and hugged and kissed in a mutual sympathy.

"Well, you are alive yet, old man," Jack remarked, as he shook hands with Tom.

"Yes, I am pretty hard to kill, I guess," said Tom, as Bill and Jack took seats. "But he'd have finished me but for Dora," and he explained to them how she had seized and wrenched the pistol from Al Morton's hand just in time to save him.

The young firemen had a pleasant visit, and then took leave of Tom and Dora. Jack and his wife went home and Bill Saxton hastened back to the engine house to tell the boys what Tom had said. He had hardly finished telling his story when the fire bell struck. Instantly every member was at his post, and in ten seconds the huge engine dashed out of the engine house and went off down the street with a roar.

They went past the Carlton House, and saw Tom and Dora at the window. A wild cheer went up from each boy fireman, and the next moment they were out of sight down the street. It was a big fire, and two lives were lost. The firemen of the three companies worked like heroes, and saved several. But no daring deeds were done save by Dan Allen, who came near losing his life in trying to get an old man out of the burning building. He succeeded, however, and the firemen and spectators cheered him as he came down to the ground. The next morning, when Tom read the account of the fire in the papers, he said to Dora that he was sorry he was not there with the boys.

"Well, I am glad you were not," she replied. "You are not strong enough yet for such hard work," and she sat down by him and told him of many things she wished him to do now that he was her husband. The next day his physician told him he could go out, and would run no risk whatever, so far as his hurt was concerned.

"Then I am going to see the boys to-night," he said to Dora.

"But you must not run to any fires," she quickly interposed.

"Well, I won't if no fire breaks out," he returned smilingly.

He went to the company's hall, and the boys received him with a hurrah, crowding about him to shake his hand.

"You have everything in shape for the parade, I see," he remarked to Saxton.

"Yes, and you ought to see the wreaths we have for the two brides who are to ride in front of the engine," Saxton replied. "We are going to take the prize all along the line, and don't you forget it."

Clang—clang—clang! The great fire bell once more called them to duty, and Tom Hazen was one of the first to bound downstairs, don his fireman's hat, seize his trumpet, and dash out with the engine for the scene of conflagration. The fire was in a tenement house down in the lower end of the city. The building was of frame, four stories high, and burned like tinder. It was crowded with poor families, some of whom had retired to rest after a daily struggle for bread.

Mazeppa No. 2 was the second company to reach the fire, the Vigilant being much nearer to it than the others. But the difference was only a few brief moments, and in an incredibly short space of time two streams were pouring upon the burning building.

"Up with the ladders!" cried Tom, and the boys, cheered by the sound of his voice, rushed the ladders up to a third story window where two women were screaming for help.

Tom sprang forward and went up the ladder with the agility of a squirrel.

"Come out on the ladder!" he called to both of the women, and one came out to him.

The other one was in the act of climbing out when a loud explosion in the room behind her sent her headlong down upon Tom and the other who had preceded her.

CHAPTER XV.—Conclusion.

The woman uttered a wild shriek and fell heavily on the one Tom was assisting down the ladder. The other screamed, and then all three went tumbling earthward together. A cry of

horror went up from both firemen and spectators, for all seemed to be looking upon the death of all three at one blow. But, with a pertinacity that never once forsook him, Tom fiercely gripped both women as he went tumbling along the ladder; he tried to break the force of their fall by catching on to the rungs with his legs.

Suddenly, when some six feet above ground, both his legs went between the rungs. Instantly he crooked them, and thus hung suspended head downward, still holding on to the two women. The dress of one tore loose, and she fell to the ground. But the force of her fall was so broken she was not hurt. The other one he held to and she hung just a few feet above the ground. Two firemen quickly rescued her, and then Tom followed, completely exhausted by the tremendous strain to which he had been subjected. But the wild cheering that went up from every eye-witness of his gallant act was heard halfway across the city. The news of his narrow escape from death by a fall from the ladder flew like wildfire, and soon reached the Carlton House.

Dora heard of it, of course, for there are always people who make it a business to do things they ought not to do, and she immediately called a carriage. By the time it was ready she had asked a gentleman to go with her. They were driven rapidly toward the scene of conflagration. When they came in sight of the burning buildings which had now become a great bed of coals on which the firemen were still pouring streams of water, it was all her escort could do to keep her from rushing right into the very hottest place to ask for Tom.

"Tom has been sent home," Bill Saxton said.

Dora sprang forward and asked:

"Is he hurt?"

"No; but he had a narrow escape, and the chief sent him home."

"He would not have been sent away unless he was hurt," she replied, turning to her escort. "Take me home, please," and she looked faint and weak.

Just then Jack Thorn saw her, and ran to ask if she had seen Tom.

"No. I came after him."

"The rogue is all right. The chief sent him home because two lives are enough for one man to save. Lord, but you should have seen him! I thought he was a goner at one time, but don't think he is hurt the least bit."

That was enough. His cheerful manner and jolly way of expressing himself satisfied her that Tom was not much hurt, if hurt at all.

"Come, we'll go home," she said, and they turned away from the scene of the fire and hurried up the street.

When they reached the hotel Dora found Tom very uneasy about her. She ran to him, threw her arms about his neck, and burst into tears.

"Oh, I thought you were hurt!" she sobbed.

"Well, you see how groundless your fears were, do you not?" he said.

Though he said he was not hurt, Tom felt sore in every fiber and muscle the next morning. It had been the worst strain to which he had ever been subjected, and he felt little like going out that day. The press praised his gallant deed in glowing terms, and Dora was prouder than ever of her choice. Not one of the Mortons came to her side, when scores were sending up congratulations to her and Tom. At last the day of the great firemen's parade came, and bands of music were heard all over the city.

The Mazeppa's engine had been kept hidden from the public all the day before, and no one outside the company knew just how it was going to be decorated. Every member was in a new uniform, and felt sure of taking the prize as they marched through the streets of the city. When they passed out of the engine house the engine was a marvel of beauty. It was covered with huge bridal wreaths. So were the horses, and on the big black horse on the right sat Dora, clad in bridal robes. On the other sat Dollie, similarly dressed. They were both beauties, and the happiness that shone in their faces rendered them more beautiful still.

It was a sight never to be forgotten, for ever since the world began a bride has always been interesting to men and women.

The fact that the bride on the right was the daughter of the Governor of the State, rendered her all the more interesting.

Tom and Jack, the two happy husbands of the brides, marched on foot in front of the engine.

As they passed the Carlton House, Dora looked up and saw her father and mother on the balcony. The surprise was mutual.

They did not know that she was going to ride in the parade and she did not dream of their presence in the city.

When the parade was over Dora hastened in a carriage to join her parents at the hotel. Tom was with her.

"Here's my Tom, mother!" she exclaimed, as she and Tom entered the room where they were.

The mother greeted Tom with a motherly embrace, and called him her son.

After the parade Tom resigned his place as foreman of Mazeppa No. 2, and Jack Thorn was promoted to succeed him.

Al Morton was sent to an asylum, where he remained for two years, and was then pronounced cured. His mother then took him to Europe.

Tom and Dora moved to the home of the governor, and a year later a child was born to them —a boy.

Tom studied law in the office of the governor, and in the course of time represented the district in Congress.

Next week's issue will contain "THE BLUE MASK; OR, FIGHTING AGAINST THE CZAR."

POTATOES FOR FERTILIZING.

Thousands of bushels of potatoes will be used for fertilizing in Owosso, Mich., this year as a result of the slow demand and the low prices, according to growers here.

Another result of the low prices, it is said, will be to greatly reduce the acreage planted this season.

J. V. Sheap, county agent, has advised farmers to form a potato growers' exchange, declaring that this would equalize the distribution and establish prices.

CURRENT NEWS

LADYBIRD BEETLES' BANQUET.

A feast royal has been enjoyed by 13,000 ladybird beetles on a handful of vetch aphis in the entomology laboratory of the Oregon Agricultural College Experiment Station. The beetles were collected from their winter hibernation quarters on top of a nearby butte, and will be used to help combat vetch aphis infecting local fields, and it is hoped valuable information will be obtained from the experiment. They are the natural enemies of the plant lice and devour them greedily.

TO LIE IN HUSBAND'S COFFIN.

For sixteen years a coffin containing the ashes of her husband has occupied a place of honor in the parlor of Mrs. Emma B. Everett's home, Lafayette, Ind. Mrs. Everett, who died May 21, at the age of eighty-six, will be buried in the casket, and the ashes of her husband will be scattered on her grave in Greenbush Cemetery.

Judge Frank B. Everett, the husband, who presided over the County Court here for many years, died in 1905. His body was cremated.

DOG SAVES MASTER'S LIFE.

To the timely arrival of his dog while he was having a desperate fight with a yearling bull in his barnyard, Grant Hawley, a farmer of Lookout, Pa., attributes his life. The bull, which had been considered harmless, suddenly attacked the farmer, and for some time he fought the beast empty handed, keeping hold of one of its horns.

He was finally knocked down, and just at this time the big dog appeared, seized the bull by the nose and held on until Hawley was able to escape. He was not much hurt.

BEES ALIGHT ON MULE.

Work stopped on the Yolo county, Cal., highway one Saturday afternoon, and druggists and veterinarians were kept busy for a few hours after a swarm of bees, blown by a stiff wind, alighted near a band of mules employed on construction work at Carruth Corners, near Esparto. The bees had left the Freeman Parker apiary, bound for other parts. But the queen bee picked out a soft spot on a Missouri mule and the trouble began. One horse was killed, twenty were badly stung, while a number of workmen were forced to apply for medical treatment.

RAREST STAMPS GO UNDER HAMMER.

The world's greatest stamp collection is to be sold at auction by the French Government next month, and is expected to bring at least 100,000,000 francs. The collection was started by Ferrari de la Renautiere, and at the outbreak of the war was owned by an Austro-Italian syndicate, although it was kept in Paris, where it formed the centre of the world's philatelist markets. When it was sequestered some of the neutral owners of the collection tried to prevent its sale, but the Government decided to reject their pleas.

Before the war the collection, which contains more than 75,000 stamps, including the rarest Mauritius, Cape of Good Hope and Guinea series, was valued at 50,000,000 francs. It is understood that French philatelists are trying to raise a fund to keep the collection here, but American amateur collectors, if the exchange rate on the dollar does not drop, will likely control the market.

CRACKS SIXTY SAFES WITH TWO PLAIN TOOLS.

With no other tools than a drill and a hammer, Francis Harmon, 22 years old, left a trail of broken and rifled safes in downtown Broadway and other business sections. When the safes failed to produce the loot he expected or desired he pasted a slip of paper to the safe or a desk on which he had written:

"We are disappointed over the contents of this safe. You must do better, as we may return."

Frequently, however, his resentment aroused after opening an empty safe, he turned to malicious destruction of office property and stock, which he accomplished by flooding the places. He would plug basins and sinks, turn on the faucets and depart when the water was running full force.

Early the other morning Harmon had finished breaking into and exploring nine safes in the different offices at 349 Broadway, and while moving about in the office of Hinchman, Vezin & Co., on the second floor, he carelessly permitted a ray from his lantern to flash near a Broadway window. Policeman John Qungliano of the Beach Street Station saw the light, and when the watchman let him in they found several offices flooded from overflowing basins, but the burglar had gone out of a rear window.

The policeman and the watchman found Harmon concealed in the kitchen of a restaurant next door, at 351 Broadway. He had a revolver, but did not resist arrest. He had no previous record at Police Headquarters. "Oh, I guess you can make it sixty safes I've cracked," admitted Harmon when Inspector Coughlin checked over the long list and sought to know who were his accomplices. Harmon said he had worked alone, but had got a hint how to do it from a man he met in a lodging house.

"Some of the safes were as easy to open as soap boxes," bragged Harmon. "All I had to do was to drill and crack them two inches above the combination and knock off the combination with a hammer. I was an amateur when I began seven months ago, and I became expert at it."

Copies of the slips of paper like those left behind at some of his robberies were found in his pocket.

Harmon said he would hide in the building before closing time and work his way downstairs, then wait for the place to be opened in the morning and slip out. He said he had worked at various jobs since he was discharged from an orphan asylum at Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson. Magistrate Renaud, in Tombs Court, held him in $2,500 bail for examination.

The Young Mail Carrier

—OR—

The Dangers Of The Postal Road

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VII.

The Boy Mail Carrier Meets With An Unexpected Adventure.

"I heard your story, young man," he said, "and I want to ask you if you are sure that a letter was not taken from the pouches when Dan Despard examined them?"

"I was looking at him all the time," confidently said Tom. "and I am sure that he did not take any letter."

"Then it has not come yet, and that is strange," muttered the captain, and then he walked away, leaving Tom to wonder what sort of a letter a company of cavalry was waiting in Silver City for. His work was done for the day and he at once rode to his home.

The boy mail carrier found his father getting on nicely and still able to sit up in a chair. Tom thought that there was enough for his father and mother to worry about, and so decided to make no mention of the perils he had lately encountered on the postal road.

He did not know of anything he could do for Mr. Cornwallis and his pretty daughter, and hoped that Cameron would speedily return and attend to the matter of the ransom, so that Betty would not have to remain very long in the society of the villains who held her prisoner. He doubted very much that the sheriff would succeed in capturing the wily robber chieftain and his band and felt quite sure that the release of the mine owner and his daughter would come about through the payment of the hundred thousand dollars.

He helped his mother around the house and then rested until the time for his return trip with the mails on the following day. By that time Black Dick would also be completely rested and would be eager to stretch his legs over the forty-mile route between Silver City and Little Medicine.

Tom had passed through a strenuous day and slept like only a healthy and tired boy can sleep, but he was quite sure when he awoke in the morning that he had dreamed of Betty Cornwallis.

Black Dick was fairly dancing when Tom rode away to Silver City and the boy had to restrain the fleet and powerful steed. The cavalrymen were still to be seen on all sides, and once more Tom wondered what their presence in such numbers meant.

He secured his pouches, looked well to the condition of his pistols, saw that his lasso was neatly coiled and ready to come to hand, and then started off on his forty-mile ride.

Two hours later, going along the road at a gentle canter that covered the distance in a manner that Black Dick could keep up mile after mile, he came to the rocky pass in which the hold-up of the day before had taken place. He did not draw rein, but looked with interest at the places where the bandits had stood while uttering the command to the little party to throw up their hands, and as it occurred to him that some of them might be around, he drew his pistols from the holsters.

He rode safely through the pass, however, seeing no signs of any enemy, and when he came out the other end was about to put back his weapons, when he heard a piercing scream. He looked up towards the place where the entire party of the day before had left the road and entered upon the natural pathway that ran up among the buttes, and then he saw something that made him speak to Black Dick in a way that sent the fleet stallion forward with great bounds.

This is what the boy mail carrier saw:

Flying down the winding natural pathway that descended from the buttes, her blond hair streaming out behind her as she fled with fleet leaps down the winding incline, came Betty Cornwallis. It was almost impossible for Tom to credit the evidence of his senses, for the last thing in the world that he expected to see was the girl he had left a prisoner among Dan Despard's men, but there she was, and the scream that had left her lips and which had first attracted Tom's attention was probably caused by the discovery that four men were coming after her.

The four men, members of Despard's band, were all mounted, and their long rifles were slung at their backs. They were urging their horses to a fast clip, and Tom could see that it would be but a few minutes before they would overtake the escaping girl. The latter ran well, her arms close to her sides and her body bent forward, but the horses were gaining on her fast and it would only be a matter of minutes before they would run her down.

The girl put on a burst of speed that showed that she was a fine runner, and with a graceful leap cleared the low wall of bushes that skirted the road, and as she did so Tom, thrilled to the core with her courage and skill, shouted at the top of his voice:

"Betty!"

The girl heard him, seemed to recognize his voice, turned her head towards him, and then wheeled around in the road and ran in his direction.

The horsemen were still about five hundred yards away when Tom uttered the girl's name in a shout that could have been heard a quarter of a mile, and when they looked up and saw the young mail carrier they at once reached around for their rifles to take a shot at him.

But Tom West didn't have to reach for anything, his pistols being in his hands, and that made all the difference.

(To be continued.)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

CLOSE CALL.

P. W. Herren, who lives on the Rolling Fork, Ky., found himself in an uncomfortable position just after the heavy rain recently, when he tried to ford the Rush branch. A part of the harness gave way and the horse walked out and left him sitting in the buggy in the middle of the stream with a big rise from the heavy rains coming down. Friends, however, drove in and brought him back to safety.

COWBOY GORED TO DEATH.

Jerry Wright, of Brady, Texas, one of the cowboys exhibiting with a roundup at Parsons, Kan., died from injuries sustained when he was gored by a steer which he was trying to throw before a large audience. Wright jumped from his horse and downed the steer, which rolled on him, its horns piercing his abdomen. He was rushed to a hospital, where he died within the hour.

WESTON STILL HIKES AT 82.

Edward P. Weston, the aged pedestrian who once walked across the continent, still walks about twelve miles daily, according to his neighbors near Rosendale, although 82 years old.

Weston has been living recently on a farm in Plutarch, six miles from Rosendale. Each day the weather is favorable the veteran walker hikes to Rosendale and back. He also hikes another three miles a day to get his mail.

BOOK CAME BACK.

"The Puppet Crown" book came back the other day. It left Dec. 11, 1909, and in the years it was away it lost polish and took on a ragged sort of look. It is tarnished and its back is bent. There are many "stars" made by thumb prints on the "crown." "But the jewels in it sparkle as bright as they ever did," according to Miss Nellie Tosh, assistant librarian, who received the book by parcel post recently.

"The Puppet Crown" was lent by the public library in Kansas City, Ka., to Irene Ireton, then living at No. 2910 North Fifth Street. Where it went from there is a mystery. Irene does not live at that address now. A new card will be made out and the book again placed on the shelves for circulation.

MELONS GROW UNDER PAPER.

As a result of experiments conducted for three years a melon farmer near Wenatchee, Wash., is papering thirty acres of his land much the same as a paper hanger covers walls.

The material is cheap building paper that has been treated with a light coating of tar. The plan worked out is to cover the field to mulch the soil. Holes are cut for the hills of melons. The sturdy plants send their creepers and runners out over the paper, but all weeds are smothered. There is a 50 per cent. saving in labor for cultivation and irrigation.

The water from the ditches seeps under the paper mulch remaining many days longer than when exposed to the burning sun of this semi-arid section.

For several years a number of cantaloupe growers have experimented with paper mulching, which has also been carried on to some extent in the pineapple plantations in Hawaii. It was found that the vines produced cleaner and sweeter fruit when allowed to ripen on the clean paper floor, and that there was an absence of pests. The question of a suitable material is the real solution to the successful project of this new idea as a heavy porous felt paper is desired.

Should the scheme become of extensive use a co-operative paper mill to manufacture suitable material from straw and cornstalks may be built.

Many farmers mulch their melons with straw and hay, but find this material becomes wet and rots, damaging the ripening fruit. The straw and hay also harbor a multitude of insects and weeds grow through.

The paper is laid flat and the edges cemented. Round openings are cut for hills and earth and sand bury the cut edges, forming a bowl-shaped crater, out of which the vines emerge.

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The "White Death."

By PAUL BRADDON.

The ranch of Senor Diaz was on a charming slope overlooking the broad waters of one of the tributaries of the Parana, on whose opposite shore the rank grass grew ten and twelve feet high. The house itself had a tropical character; it was Spanish-American, with cool, shady veranda, a long, low front, painted walls and latticed windows, a spacious court, and a flat roof, provided with a parapet, which gave the structure the semblance of a fort. Many acres of cultivated land showed long lines of sugar cane and tall trees laden with bananas, in surprising contrast to the dark, impenetrable mass of wild bush land which surrounded the settlement in the farther distance.

Senora Diaz was one of the tropical beauties of whom Murillo dreamed.

"I am going to test your gallantry," she said, coming out on the veranda where I sat, "by asking you to help me water my flowers, for with my lame hand it is not easy for me to lift the heavy watering-pot."

"I am at your service, but allow me—am I wrong?—to remind you that you promised me the story of how your hand was lamed."

"Certainly. As soon as the flowers are watered we will have coffee on the veranda, and you shall hear all about it."

Accordingly, I was shortly sipping coffee, with the little Lolita, my host's only daughter, and my pet, beside me, while her mother rolled a cigarette, lighted it, and began as follows:

"When we first came here, years ago, it was a very different-looking place. The wild bush land reached to the edge of the water, and was such a dark wilderness of thorns, brambles, palms, wild fig trees, and other tropical vegetation, that I did not dare venture in its depths. But my husband and his workmen went manfully to work, felled trees, unrooted stumps, made hedges and ditches, all day long, except in the severest part, and I often saw them come home so wearied that they would fall asleep where they stood, and first think of food three or four hours later when they awoke.

"After a while they got a portion of the ground under settlement, but had a throng of foes to combat. The worst were the ants, which, watched for on account of their depredations on plantations, have a way of making underground passages till they undermine the whole surface of a field, and it falls in like the crust of a cake. Just north of us is a great gap in the ground, full of bushes and wild grass, with here and there some rotten timber, where a whole settlement sank from the ants undermining the foundations. From this comes the saying we have in Paraquay that our worst enemies are the Indian braves and the Indian ants.

"Luckily, the only Indians were friendly ones, who exchanged all kinds of provisions, especially dried meats, for knives and brandy. We poisoned the ants, dug up their nests, flooded their passageways with boiling water, and so, in a great measure, were free from them, although they now sometimes come from the woods to attack the plantation.

"But after them came another plague—snakes. For a long time I thought it was hopeless. My husband used to call them the tax collectors, and they did come just as regularly. No day passed without our finding one or more in the house. And once—oh, heavens!—what a fright I had! When Lolita was a baby my husband and his men had gone off one morning to work, as usual, and the child was asleep on a mat at the end of the room. Suddenly I saw on the floor the skin of a mouse, from which the whole body had been sucked, as from an orange. I knew at once that a snake must be near, for they feed on mice, and eat them in this fashion; but, much as I looked around, I could see no snake, till all at once it occurred to me—perhaps it was under the baby's mat! I snatched the child up and placed her in safety. Then I softly lifted a part of the mat, and there it was, the long, slimy, green and gold reptile, coiled up and fast asleep. Ah, how I jumped! I ran out in the court to call help. Luckily our man Jose was there, and he killed it. But as we cleared more acres the snakes left us to hide in the forest. I began to hope our cares were ended, but they had only just begun. Wild beasts now first appeared on the scene.

"One morning, just as we were at breakfast, one of our herdsmen brought the news that our cattle, which grazed in the tall grass on the other side of the river, had been attacked by a jaguar, that had killed one of the bulls. The man who told us just barely escaped with his life, yet he would scarcely have done so if he had not misled the beast, or had there not been a fat ox there.

"A week passed without a new alarm, and we had come to think less about it, when suddenly three or four Indians rushed to tell us how a great jaguar had broken into their camp and killed a woman and one of their dogs. When my husband heard the story he concluded that it was the same animal that had attacked our bull, for the Indians described it as a creature of singular color, far lighter than any they had seen about there, so they named it 'The White Death.' We all thought it now time to do something, and my husband called his people together to go out and hunt it.

"I remember that morning distinctly. They went away cheerfully enough, each man with his gun and hunting knife, and Moro, the bloodhound, was with them. My husband turned round just as he entered the wood and waved his hand to me; then they vanished in the forest.

"When I found myself with Lolita in the house, and thought of what might happen if they met that terrible wild animal, such anxiety seized me (although I never thought I could be in danger) that I could not be contented till I had locked every door in the house; and then I seated myself in the great sitting-room, took Lolita upon my lap, and tried to tell her a story.

"Suddenly I heard a scratch along the roof, and then a dull thud, as if something heavy had fallen. Anxious and nervous as I was, I started up with a cry, although I had no presentiment

what it was. The next moment I heard just over me a sound which I could not mistake—a long, passionate roar, that I had often heard from the woods at night, and never without feeling as if my heart stood still. The thought rushed through my mind, 'Oh, Heaven! The jaguar!'

"I shall never forget that moment. One minute I was rigid and helpless as if life had departed, and then a thought flashed upon me—the jaguar was not to be kept off of the lower floor, because there were no doors, only curtains. There was a large empty chest in the room, and I seized my child and entered it, shutting down the lid and holding it from the inside.

"It was not a moment too soon. We were scarcely hidden when I heard the great paws scratching along the floor, and the hungry sniffing of the jaguar showed me that he was in search of food. He came straight to the chest, and paused a moment, as if he feared a trap. Then he put his head close to a small opening, so that I could feel his hot breath. He sniffed a little, and then tried to raise the lid with a paw.

"How I trembled! But the great paw would not go in the narrow crevice, and I held the cover fast by clinging to the inner part of the lock with all my strength of desperation. All he could do was to stretch out his tongue and lick my fingers till they bled, as if they had been scratched by a saw. And then, as he tasted blood, and heard Lolita cry—for my poor darling was just as frightened as I was—his eagerness increased, and he began to make piercing yells, which sent icy chills over me.

"Still the worst was yet to come. When the jaguar found that he could not reach me from below he sprang upon the chest. His huge weight crushed my two fingers between the two parts of the lock. Then I thought all was over, and shrieked so that it rang through the whole house.

"But my cries were answered by a sound that made my heart throb with joy—answered by the barking of our bloodhound. The jaguar heard it, too, for he sprang down, and stood for a moment listening, and then ran to the door, as if to flee.

"Again came the sound of the dog's bark, this time nearer, and at the same time the voices of men calling to each other. Contrary to expectation, they were already coming back. Meanwhile, the jaguar seemed to be bewildered, and ran wildly to and fro. Suddenly a loud cry came from one of the windows, and then two shots and a fearful howl. Then my husband's voice anxiously called:

"'Cochita, where are you?'

"I could just get out of the chest, drag myself to the door and let my husband in. Then I swooned away.

"They told me afterword that our bloodhound found the jaguar's trail, leading straight back to our house, and they all hurried home like mad.

"My husband and Jose came ahead, and shot the jaguar.

"I could not move a joint of that hand for many weeks afterward. The Indians gave me medicine to heal it, and they say that after a while I can use it again. I did not need this injury to make me remember that day. If I were to live a thousand years I could not forget the terrible moments I spent in that chest."

SNAKES AND TARANTULAS SWARM OVER STEAMSHIP.

Many are the stories about Greek and Italian fruit merchants sleeping comfortably in their flats on bunches of bananas and crates of alligator pears, using a bag of peanuts as a pillow.

But the story brought to this old port of New York the other day by the crew of the United Fruit Liner Zacapa, transcends the most awful nightmare of man or quadruped that has ever camped under a banana tree growing the "boneless" or so-called "spineless" banana.

With snakes and tarantulas reported swarming among the bananas in the holds, the steamship Zacapa arrived from Tela, Honduras, after one of the most exciting voyages since she has been in commission.

The first snake was seen the first day out of Tela by Captain Walter Barrett and George Dexter, fruit observer, on their morning round of inspection. This was a brown-colored snake believed to be a member of the moccasin family and, according to Mr. Dexter, more than four feet long.

Captain Barrett ran into the reptile in close quarters and he and Dexter made a hurried exit through the small opening into the hold and out on deck. They then armed themselves with clubs and went back to kill the snake, but discovered no traces of it.

Examination of the fruit in transit is made twice a day by the captain and fruit observer and every four hours by the officers on watch. The next day out numerous tarantulas were seen.

The first of these elect of the scorpion family sprang from a bunch of bananas to lick the hand of Second Officer S. K. Miller, and ran up his arm before he could push it off. First Officer G. D. Lawson and Arthur Wilson also saw snakes and tarantulas, according to the reports made by members of the crew and officers, the second and third day out from Tela.

The only reason for the reptiles and the banana bugs being in the cargo that could be figured out by the officers was that the bananas were all loaded by machinery, which handles bunches very gingerly instead of the rougher methods when manual labor is employed.

The Zacapa in calling at Tela did so to open up a new banana shipment port, and the fruit loaded into the Zacapa was all from a new plantation of young trees which had not been worked over a great length of time.

For this reason it is thought the jungle snakes are more numerous there than on the older plantations.

After the Zacapa had been at sea three days there was little more seen of the bugs and reptiles. This, according to the officers, was due to the fact that the fruit stored in the refrigerator holds had been cooled down to a point where the tarantulas were being thoroughly benumbered by the cold air. Their first familiarity was occasioned by the instinct for warmth, when the serpents saw the light the officers carried with them into the holds.

In all the officers were sure they had seen seven different snakes besides the tarantula.

The Zacapa brought only five passengers to New York.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JUNE 29, 1921.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

FARMER KILLS LION.

N. P. Hagan, a farmer living near Yoakum, Tex., reports that he killed a lion on his ranch near Kelly Creek, in Lavaca County, and sent the hide to San Antonio to be made into a rug. Since the killing, he says, three more have been seen in the same neighborhood, but were not captured.

Mr. Hagan is unable to account for the appearance of these beasts in this part of the country, as they are the first ever seen here by the present settlers.

WOMAN MUMMY FOUND IN DENMARK.

The mummified body of a woman who died 3,000 years ago was found recently buried in a field in the Jutland district of Denmark and is being unwrapped by employees of the National Museum. Her coffin was the hollow trunk of an oak tree and the body was wrapped in a cowside, says a cablegram to the New York *Herald*. She appears to have been a person of rank. Her garments included a short jacket with sleeves and a petticoat and she wore two belts around her waist and two bronze bracelets on her arms.

DEFIES BIG MEN TO LIFT HER.

Mme. Komako Kimura of Tokio won the applause of an audience the other night in the Anderson Galleries, Park avenue and 59th street, New York, by feats that puzzled a lay committee that went to the stage to watch her.

Count Tolstoy, Dr. G. A. Gayer and Count Markoe, each robust, found her ninety pounds only normal weight when she willed it so, but each strained himself in vain to lift her when she stood on tiptoe to lay a finger on his neck, thus matching with her tiny finger the performance of Johnnie Coulon, who was the season's sensation in Paris, when he resisted the efforts of strong men there to lift him. Attempts to lift Mme. Kimura failed equally when she stood with her back to the big men and did not touch their necks.

Next the smiling little Japanese woman matched her skill against the strength of the same men by inviting them to lower a stick, which she held across her open palms, by bearing their weight on it while firmly grasping it. They grew red in the face, but could not press the stick downward.

Her most puzzling feat involved the help of her husband, Prof. Hideo Kimura. Seated in a chair in apparent meditation for a moment or two, she slowly raised a bared arm, into which the professor thrust a needle for its full length of about three inches. The thrust drew no blood and Mme. Kimura said she felt no sensation of pain. Edward Markham, poet; John Reilly, attorney; Dr. W. H. Bates and Count Markoe examined the arm while the needle was in it and assured the audience that there was no stain of blood.

The appearance of Prof. and Mrs. Kimura was supplementary to a lecture on "What Are Ghosts?" by Dr. Hereward Carrington, which had brought an audience curious about spooks and hoping for a look-in on the spirit world. Dr. Carrington talked entertainingly of phantoms, hallucinations and haunted houses, but produced no spirits."

LAUGHS

"Tommy, if you'll saw some wood I'll tell you what I'll do." "What's that, dad?" "I'll let you have the sawdust to play circus with."

"All arrivals are washed," exclaimed the warden of the Pittsburg prison. "And if they kick up a fuss?" "Then they are ironed."

Mrs. Gadd—That new minister ain't much on visitin', is he? Mrs. Gabb—No, I guess maybe his wife is a purty good cook herself.

Little Willie—I say, pa, what is an empty title? Pa—An empty title, my son, is your mother's way of referring to me as the head of the house when there are visitors present.

Old Gentleman—Well, my lad, are you going fishing, or are you going to school? Little Lad—I dunno yet. I'm just a-wrastling with me conscience.

"Pop." "Yes, my son." "What is a popular uprising?" "Why, a popular uprising, my boy, is when every man in a street car gets up and offers his seat when one lone woman enters the car."

A kind old gentleman, seeing a very small boy carrying a lot of magazines, was moved to pity. "Don't all those magazines make you tired, my boy?" "Nope," the mite cheerfully replied. "I can't read."

The lecturer raised his voice with emphatic confidence. "I venture to assert," he said, "that there isn't a man in this audience who has ever done anything to prevent the destruction of our forests." A modest looking man in the back of the hall stood up. "I—er—I've shot woodpeckers," he said

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

PLOWS UP $19,300.

Fortune turned her smiling face on John Brazell, of Lansing, La., when the plow which he was operating unearthed $19,300 in gold. The sum was found on the old Patrick Callahan farm where Brazell was working as a farm hand. The money was in a glass jar and is believed to have been buried on the farm for many years.

ALL DEAD.

Some days ago Randall Jones, of Greencastle, Mo., and a friend went fox hunting, taking two hounds with them. They spent part of the night in an interesting fox chase, and then went home expecting the hounds to follow. When they failed to show up next day another hunt was instituted and they were finally found, along with their late prey, lying in some brush dead. A live electric wire from the Bartlett ranch was dangling by them, and evidently all three had come in contact with it.

ARTISTIC BUILDER SPARES FINE TREE.

Observant commuters on the Montauk division of the Long Island Railroad get a thrill of pleasure between Lynbrook and Rockville Centre, N. Y., if they watch the north side of the track. For, despite the value of real estate with a railroad siding, there is one building materials dealer there with a heart.

This paragon of traders, in building his storehouse, was left a wedge-shaped jog in the structure wide enough to accommodate a large tree. The bulding, of course, prevents any limbs for the first thirty or forty feet, a fact that has produced a most luxuriaut top. The side left open is to the south, another factor that helps keep the semi-incased tree in prime condition.

Despite the cold spring the tree has put forth a wonderful set of leaves as if in grateful recognition of its protection by the surrounding building.

A MEXICAN LION HUNT.

Lassoing lions is better for spring fever than sassafras tea, according to Stanley H. Graham, who has just returned from a three months' hunting trip in Mexico.

He brought back the skins of fourteen mountain lions, eight tigers, twelve deer, twelve Mexican monkeys and twenty peccaries.

"I've hunted nearly every variety of game in North America," he said, "but trailing the mountain lion beats them all for thrills. The only way to hunt lions is with bloodhounds and fast horses. A lion will measure seven feet four inches from nose to tip of tail and weigh '50 pounds. A Mexican lion is what you call a 'hard boiled egg.'

"The real sport is to follow a lion, howling his fury, into a cave. I'd go into the cave with a short carbine and a candle on a pole. The lion would poke his head around an alley in the cave to see the strange light. Then I'd pop him. Of course the discharge of the gun put out the candle, and it's sort of ticklish on the backbone, because you don't know whether you have really killed him or not."

Graham's wife killed four lions.

"It's more fun than playing bridge," she said.

Graham has what is said to be the only pack of bloodhounds in the world trained to hunt lions. Two of them are worth $10,000 and have sent eight criminals to the penitentiary because they were able to pick up a scent seventy-two hours old.

Once during the recent hunt the pack ran three days and nights after one lion. Graham's horse played out and the chase was given up. Graham has been hunting for twenty years. He was the hunting friends of former President Roosevelt. When not hunting he sells wallpaper.

HARVARD GRADUATE GIVEN LONELY JOB OF GULL PROTECTOR

Edward Hatch, jr., who owns Four Brothers Island, near Burlington, Vt., a rugged rock that has become famous as the breeding place of sea gulls, yesterday signed up a Harvard graduate for the lonesome job of herding gulls during their nesting season, a private philanthropy in which Mr. Hatch has been engaged for some years.

There were 1,600 applicants for the position as the result of the insertion of an advertisement in New York City newspapers, which read:

"Wanted—A man to live alone on an island; inland lake; eight miles from shore; transportation, food, shelter, boat, etc., furnished; no work, no compensation. Address Summertime, 600 Tribune Building, New York."

"I have no faith in the theories of Thomas A. Edison when it comes to selecting the man for the place," said Mr. Hatch. "I have found in my experience that a search for the best personnel generally leads to the college man. He may start slowly, but he has the equipment and once started he goes fast and straight.

"That is why I selected a college man to be warden of the gulls. The job is one that requires attitude and judgment such as an educated man may be expected to possess."

Among applicants for the wardenship of a lonely island were naturalists, lawyers, poets, authors, artists, ex-soldiers, sailors and ornithologists.

Mr. Hatch protects the breeding place of the gulls because he believes they are of the greatest value in conserving public health. He has been interested for many years in plans to prevent contamination of the waters of New York harbor. It is estimated that there are 200,000 gulls in and about the harbor, and each of them is said to consume an average of two pounds of refuse a day. To protect the eggs of nesting gulls and save the young from destruction by vandals who visit Four Brothers Island Mr. Hatch has constituted himself protector of the breeding ground. This is the ninth warden appointed.

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

DOG ADOPTS KITTENS.

An English collie dog is mothering four three-weeks-old kittens at the home of H. H. Crissman, in Upper Lockport, Pa., on the opposite side of the river.

The foster parent is more solicitous for the welfare of the little felines when the mother cat, which has practically deserted them.

Members of the Crissman family say the dog carefully guards the kittens constantly, will permit no stranger to come near and at times joins them in playful antics.

FAMILIAR ANTS' EGGS NOT EGGS.

"Ants' eggs" are familiar to many, either through having purchased them to feed goldfish or having seen them when an ant nest has been dug up in the course of gardening operations. People have called them ants' eggs, but for an ant to lay an egg as large as itself would be rather too much to expect of it.

The life history of ants is similar to that of silkworms. Starting from the true egg, which is very small and in entire proportion to the size of the laying insect, it on being hatched yields a tiny grub. These are nursed and fed by the females and neuters, the latter forming a majority of the inhabitants of a nest. After attaining full size the grub spins a white cocoon around itself and changes into a pupa. It is these pupæ which we have purchased as ants' "eggs."

KILLED RATTLER.

Mrs. M. F. Murray, of Mill Run, Pa., has not allowed her seventy-eight years to make her afraid to fight a snake, even though a rattler.

She proved it the other Friday by killing a rattlesnake four feet long and carrying ten rattles. Although it is not uncommon to encounter rattlesnakes and copperheads in the Mill Run neighborhood, even Mrs. Murray has no recollection of finding a poisonous reptile so early in the spring.

Going out in her yards Mrs. Murray heard an ominous rattle and beheld a big rattler sunning itself a few feet away. Arming herself with a hoe she bravely started an exciting fight with the snake. At the first blow of the hoe the rattler sprang at her. Mrs. Murray stepped back and got in another blow before the snake could coil for another strike. That performance was repeated until the intrepid woman landed a death blow.

SAY WOMAN CARRIED SALOON UNDER SKIRT.

The skirt was added recently to the police list of rum-carrying "vehicles," which had previously only ranged from brief-cases to bath tubs and from baby carriages to motorboats.

Detectives had, on several occasions, made unsuccessful searches for liquor in a saloon at 2,647 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. Seeing men frequently staggering out of the place, they became convinced that there was some whisky there.

One of the detectives finally noticed that Mrs. Charles Papkus, wife of the proprietor, was wearing a skirt of Civil War capacity, with great ruffles and pleats. They also noticed that Papkus, like the husband of a celebrity, was a lonesome and solitary figure, while Mrs. Papkus was always the centre of a crowd.

At last a plainclothes man of insinuating address got himself admitted to the circle of gallants who danced attendance on Mrs. Papkus and discovered the secret. The skirt, he alleged, was not only a vehicle, but a complete set of bar furniture, with large hidden pockets stocked with liquor and glasses. The popular woman and the neglected husband were both arraigned before County Judge Haskell, in Brooklyn.

NEW MACHINE GUN PENETRATES

The United States Army has developed a .50 calibre machine gun capable of firing a bullet which, at 200 yards, will penetrate the one-inch armor plate of battle tanks. Major Lee O. Wright, army ordnance department, announced May 28, as the annual convention of the ordnance section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers at Rock Island Arsenal.

The new weapon is an outgrowth of the war, he said, when fighting tanks were armored to resist the .30 calibre bullet of the rifles and machine guns then in use.

The .50 calibre machine gun fires a bullet weighing 800 grains, as compared to the 150 grains of the standard .30 calibre ammunition.

The gun is modeled along the plan of the Browning machine gun developed during the war and weighs sixty-five pounds. The gun has a muzzle velocity of 2,500 feet a second, and an effective range of from 6,000 to 7,000 yards.

In testing the new gun and ammunition the ordnance department has built a rifle range at the Aberdeen, Md., proving grounds, consisting of a pool of water 1,000 yards long and a narrow gauge railroad track running back 7,000 yards.

America's supply of walnut for gun stocks has been so nearly exhausted, Major Wright said, that the ordnance Department is now experimenting with stocks built up from thin layers of walnut cemented together.

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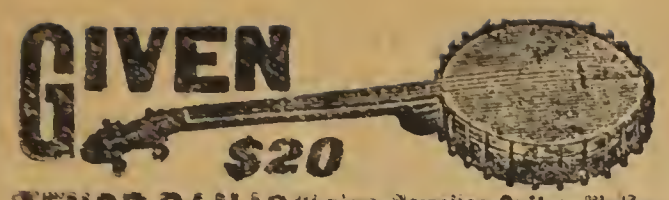
SCILLY ISLES DON'T CHANGE

The Scilly Islands, which are preparing to welcome the Prince of Wales next month, have not changed much in character since they were first seen by a Prince of Wales, nearly 300 years ago.

After the defeat of the last royalist army in Cornwall in February, 1646, it was thought well to provide for the safety of the King's eldest son, so he and Sir Edward Hyde, the future Earl of Clarendon, sailed for Scilly. There they remained until the middle of April, when fear of capture by the Parliamentary fleet impelled them to make for Jersey.

How the sixteen-year-old Prince passed the seven weeks in Scilly is unknown, but Clarendon certainly was not idle, for it was there he began his monumental "History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England." The opening pages of the original manuscript, now at Oxford, is headed "Scilly, March 18, 1646."

The islands are nearly as peaceful as at the time Charles stayed there. Only five—out of about 140—are inhabited; there are no railways, trams, motorbuses, theatres or picture palaces.



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New Hair Growth After BALDNESS

On legal affidavit, John Hart Brittain, business man, certified to this: "My head at the top and back was absolutely bald. The scalp was shiny. An expert said that he thought the hair roots were extinct, and there was no hope of my ever having a new hair growth.

"Yet now, at an age over 66, I have a luxuriant growth of soft, strong, lustrous hair! No trace of baldness. The pictures shown here are from my photographs." Mr. Brittain certified further:

After hair growth

INDIAN'S SECRET OF HAIR GROWTH

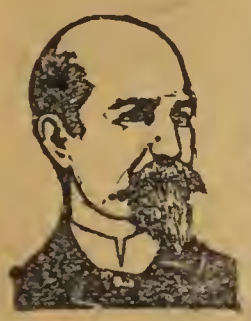

Photo when bald.

"At a time when I had become discouraged at trying various hair lotions, tonics, specialists' treatments, etc., I came across, in my travels, a Cherokee Indian 'medicine man' who had an elixir that he asseverated would grow my hair. Although I had but little faith, I gave it a trial. To my amazement a light fuzz soon appeared. It developed, day by day, into a healthy growth, and ere long my hair was as prolific as in my youthful days.

That I was astonished and happy is expressing my state of mind mildly.

Obviously, the hair roots had not been dead, but were dormant in the scalp, awaiting the fertilizing potency of the mysterious pomade.

I negotiated for and came into possession of the principle for preparing this mysterious elixir, now called Kotalko, and later had the recipe put into practical form by a chemist.

That my own hair growth was permanent has been amply proved."

How YOU May Grow YOUR Hair

It has been proved in very many cases that hair roots did not die even when the hair fell out through dandruff, fever, *alopecia areata* or certain other hair or scalp disorders. Miss A. D. Otto reports: "About 8 years ago my hair began to fall out until my scalp in spots was almost entirely bald. I used everything that was recommended but was always disappointed until at last I came across Kotalko. My bald spots are being covered now; the growth is already about three inches." G. W. Mitchell reports: "I had spots completely bald, over which hair is now growing since I used Kotalko." Mrs. Matilda Maxwell reports: "The whole front of my head was as bald as the palm of my hand for about 15 years. Since using Kotalko, hair is growing all over the place that was bald." Many more splendid, convincing reports from satisfied users.

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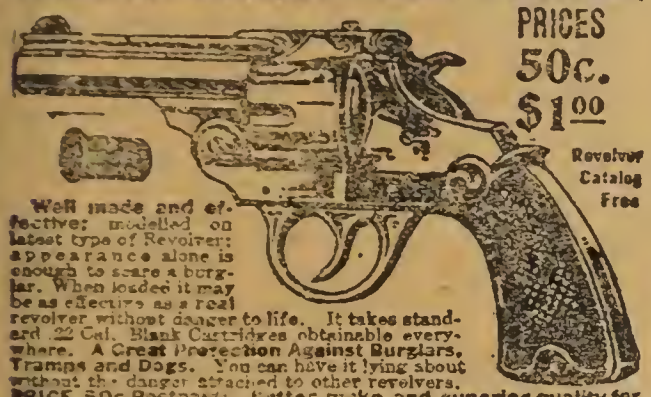

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"It looks like the boys were taking us at our word and were really going back to the mines and their farms and gardens, rather than keep up the trouble in Logan County by supplying the citizens with 'mountain dew'," Chafin said, according to the *News*. "Well, they'd better keep on getting good," he is said to have concluded, "as there are not going to be any more liquor violations in Logan when this office gets through."

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